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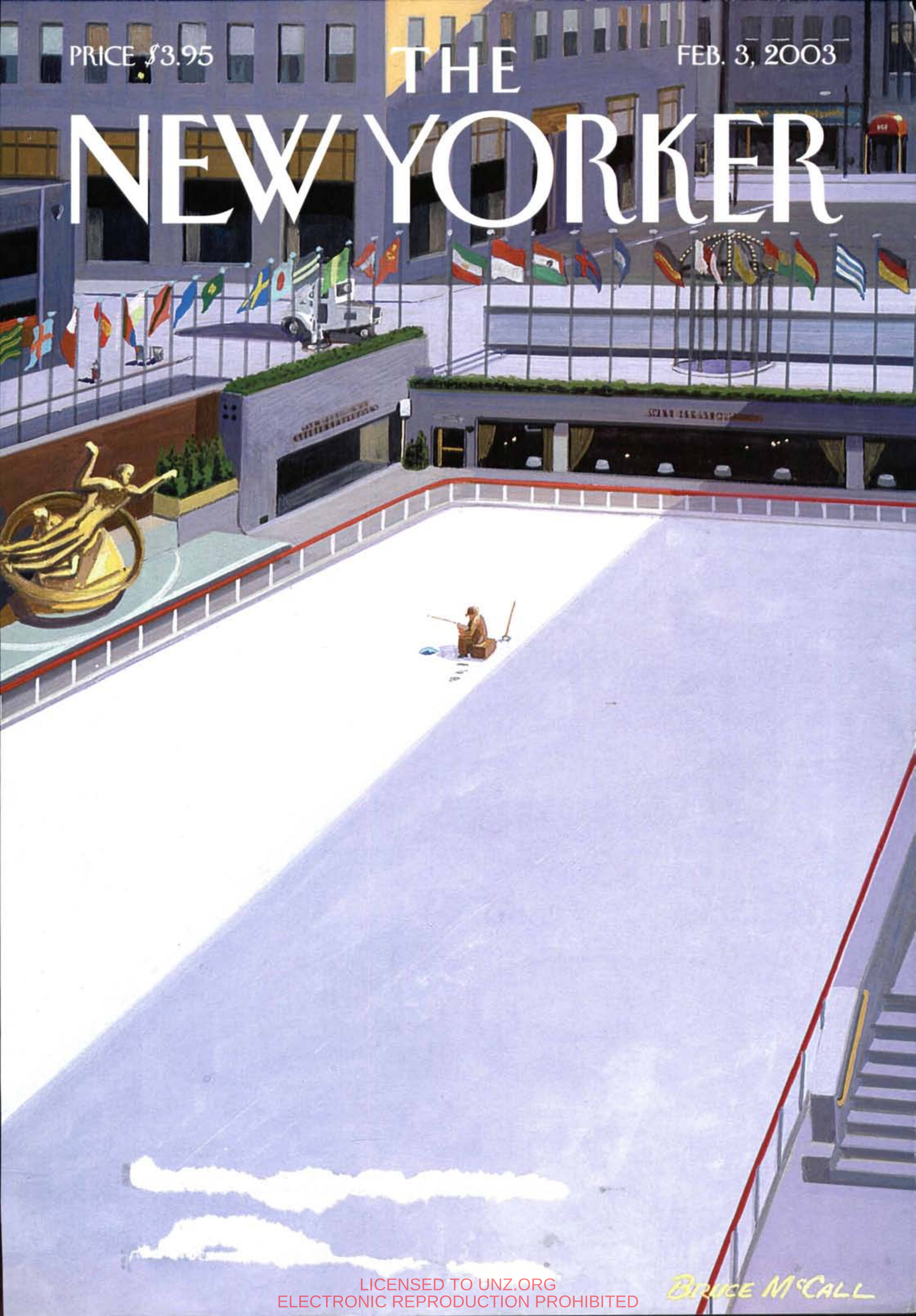
THE NEW YORKER

FEB. 3, 2003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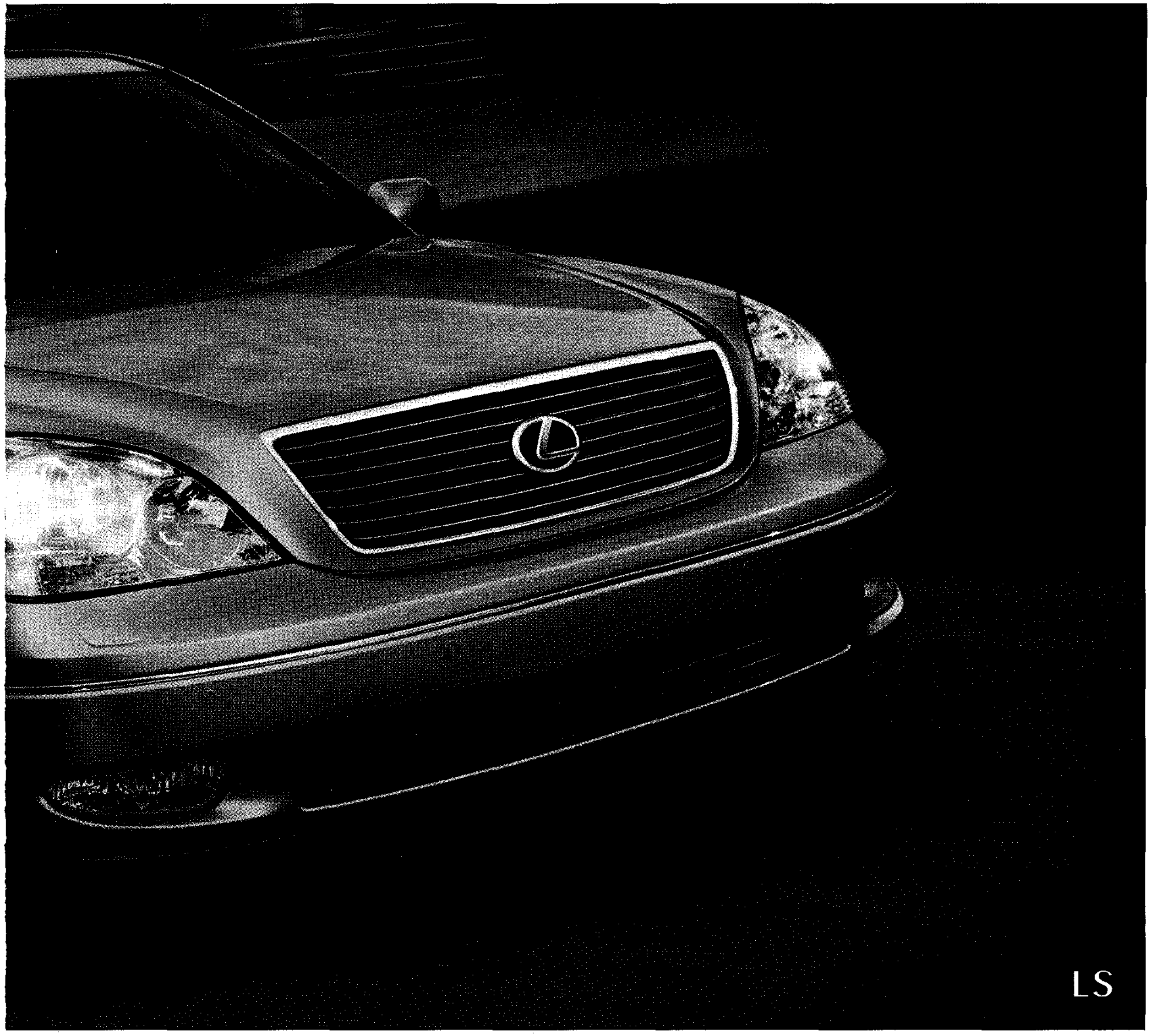

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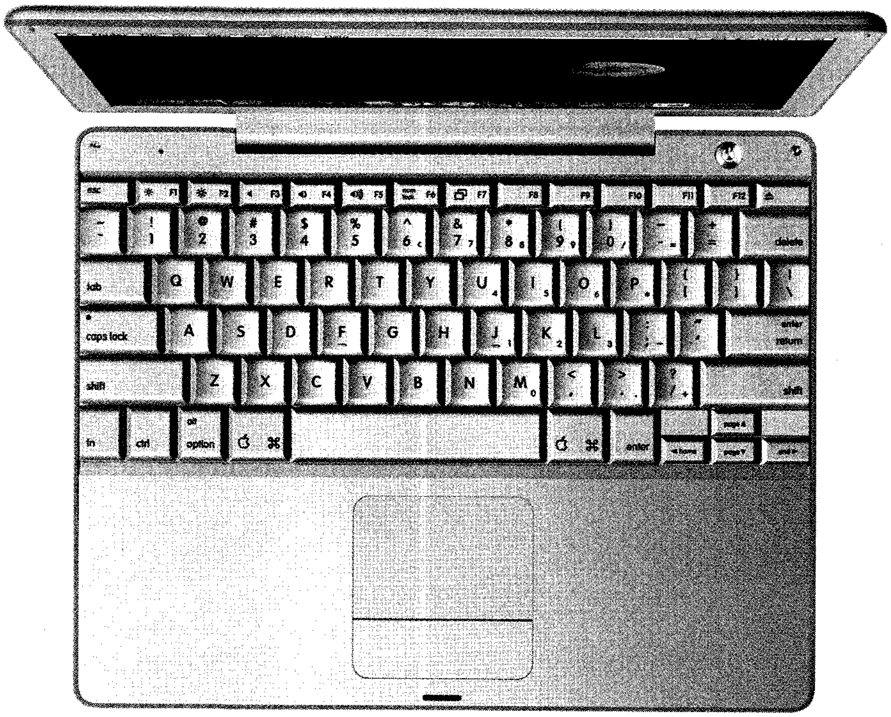

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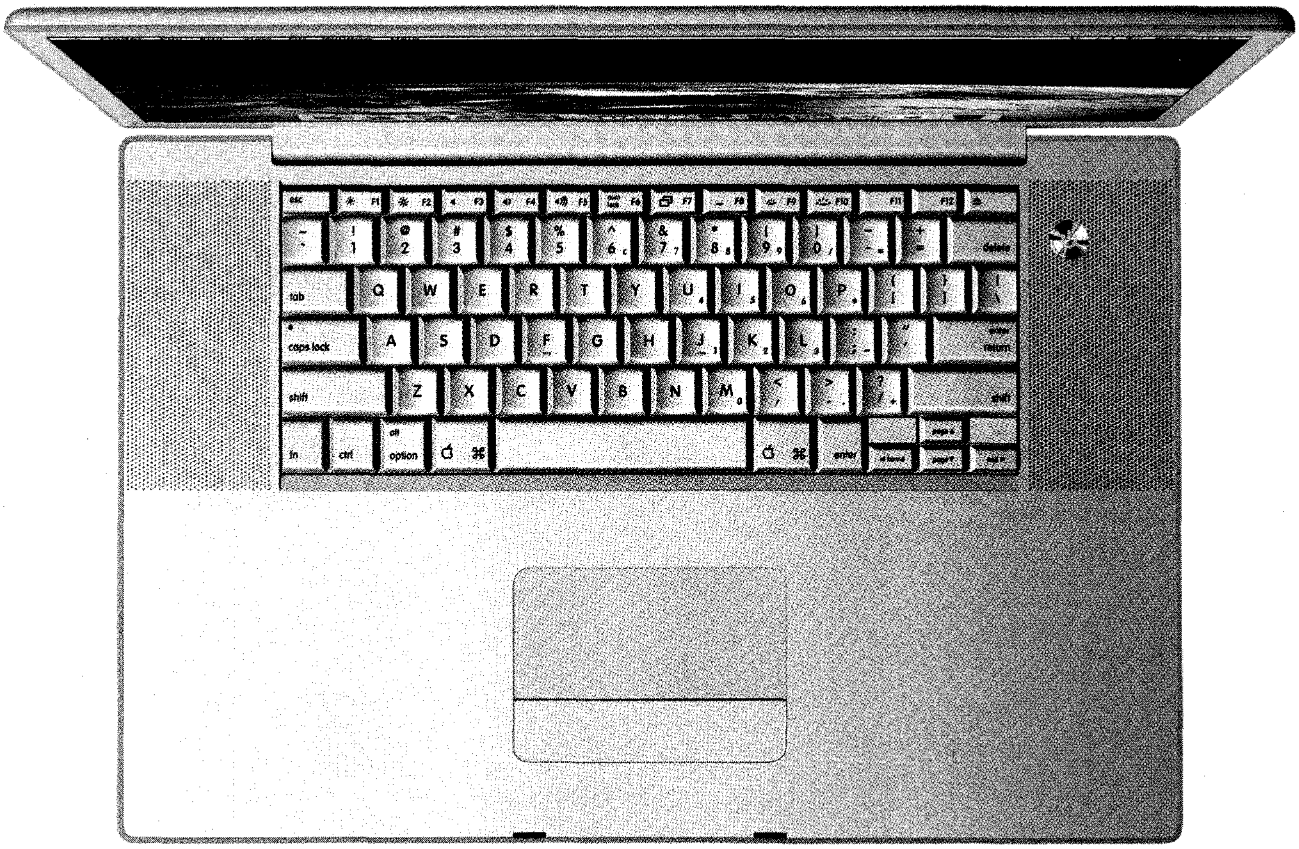

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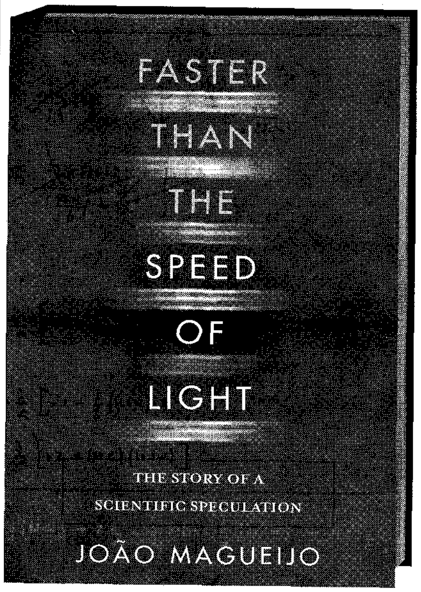
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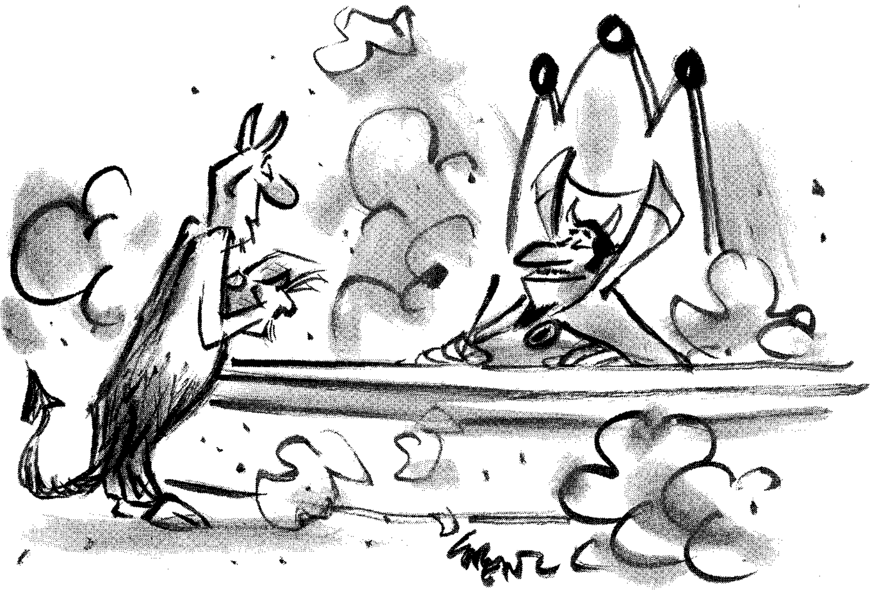

"Oh, and I've taken the liberty of sending anniversary cards to the axis of evil."

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THE MAIL

SAYING NO TO DEATH

Scott Turow's case against capital punishment is all the more convincing because he realizes that the desire to execute a killer is not "the product of an alien morality" but an impulse that he can recognize in himself ("To Kill or Not to Kill," January 6th). As Turow argues, the death penalty has, however, never been, and can never be, imposed fairly, and its existence virtually guarantees that some innocent person will eventually be executed. Like Turow (who lives in Illinois, where the outgoing governor recently commuted all current death sentences to life imprisonment after several death-row inmates were exonerated), many people can picture themselves in the role of executioner when it comes to ending the life of a wanton murderer. But they recoil at the thought of supporting a system under which a person can be killed for a crime he did not commit.

Lawrence D. Wood
Chicago, Ill.

In Turow's thoughtful article on capital punishment, he cites Sister Helen Prejean's question "Ask yourself if you're willing to inject the fatal poison." My response was "Yes, I would do it gladly in some of the notorious cases Turow describes," and that is why I am against capital punishment. I don't want to nourish that part of my soul that can enjoy hurting another person.

Rabbi Harold Kushner
Natick, Mass.

Turow writes, "I respect the right of a majority of my fellow-citizens to decide that it"—the death penalty—"ought to be imposed." But that is not what it means to be a democratic country. In the United States, at various times, the majority has believed that slavery was justified, that women shouldn't have the right to vote, that children should be required to say prayers in public schools, etc. Like all such large issues, the argument about the death penalty is a moral one—and one that needs to be decided on moral grounds, not on the basis of an opinion poll.

Lee Kossin
Providence, R.I.

UNCONVENTIONAL WARS

The United States military's emerging policy of using selective assassination as a tool in the war on terror, as described by Seymour M. Hersh, is not only futile but off target ("Manhunt," December 23rd & 30th). Futile because, for every enemy leader killed, others will crop up. Off target because the real power behind Al Qaeda and organizations like it is Islamic fundamentalism. And the only effective weapon against that force is not a Hellfire missile shot at a car in the desert but a mobilization of moderate Islamic voices willing to take Al Qaeda to task for what it has done: disgraced Islam, distorted the Koran, and committed blasphemy with every terrorist act. The United States should invest first in nurturing those moderates.

Milton Sutton
Roslyn Heights, N.Y.

Hersh expresses concern about Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's proposed use of special forces in ways that run "counter to conventional military doctrine." By hijacking civilian airplanes and flying them into commercial buildings, killing thousands of people, Al Qaeda has initiated an unconventional war, which—if we want to win it—we must, accordingly, wage in unconventional ways. If we have to tailor the fighting tactics of Delta Force and Gray Fox to beat the enemy, so be it.

Sydney P. Waud
Los Angeles, Calif.

•

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE
OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

FIFTH OF JULY
Robert Sean Leonard and Parker Posey star in a Signature Theatre Company production of the first play in Lanford Wilson's Talley trilogy, directed by Jo Bonney. In previews. Opens Feb. 3 at 6:30. (Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. 212-244-7529.)

JULIA SWEENEY IN THE FAMILY WAY
The comedienne returns to New York with a one-woman show, directed by Mark Brokaw, about life after adopting a toddler. Opens Jan. 29 at 8. (Ars Nova Theatre, 511 W. 54th St. 212-206-1515.)

KIMBERLY AKIMBO
Manhattan Theatre Club presents a new play by David Lindsay-Abaire, which spins a story around a teen-age girl afflicted with a premature aging condition. Starring Ana Gasteyer and, as the girl, the versatile sexagenarian Marylouise Burke. Set design by Robert Brill. In previews. Opens Feb. 4 at 6:45. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212.)

LITTLE FISH
In a new musical by Michael John LaChiusa ("The Wild Party"), Jennifer Laura Thompson plays a New York woman searching for the right man. Choreographed and directed by Graciela Daniele. In previews. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St., west of Eighth Ave. 212-246-4422.)

MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM
Whoopi Goldberg and Charles S. Dutton join forces in a revival of the August Wilson play. Directed by Marion McClinton. In previews. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

MUSICALS IN MUFTI
The York Theatre Company presents a staged concert reading of Noël Coward's operetta "Pacific 1860," directed by Simon Jones. Jan. 31-Feb. 2. (St. Peter's Theatre, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 212-239-6200.)

THE WINTER'S TALE
Barry Edelstein directs the Classic Stage Company's production of Shakespeare's play, with David Strathairn as King Leontes. In previews. Opens Jan. 30 at 8. (136 E. 13th St. 212-677-4210.)

OPENED RECENTLY

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BEDBOUND
The curtain falls (yes, falls) at the beginning of this startling piece of theatre, written and directed by Enda Walsh, to reveal a man and a woman in a bed—he in full business dress, she in a nightgown—enisled in a floor-to-ceiling sea of clutter worthy of "American Buffalo." The initial choked silence of the man (Brían F. O'Byrne) soon explodes in a storm of words that tells a tale of violence, sex, and the furniture business, and only gradually reveals the relationship between the two characters. O'Byrne's performance as the insanely ambitious salesman is a tour de force, both scary and hilarious. As the woman, Jenna Lamia is equally impressive, providing comic and tragic grace notes. Set design by Klara Zieglerova. (Irish Repertory, 132 W. 22nd St. 212-727-2737. Closes March 2.)

BETTY RULES
A kinetic alterna-rock musical, directed by Michael Greif ("Rent"), chronicling the nearly two-decade-long career of a real-life girl band called Betty and its members' battle to keep the group and their sanity intact on the road, at home, onstage, and even in therapy. (Zipper, 336 W. 37th St. 212-239-6200.)

LA BOHÈME
Baz Luhrmann has reset Puccini's opera in a cinematic Paris of 1957—on the eve of Godard's "Breathless"—and his *moto*-ready cast of young studs looks the part. Rodolfo and Marcello wear leather jackets and boots, Mimi sports a trench coat, and the red-hot Musetta (Jessica Comeau) has hipster slacks and an Ann-Margret kittenishness. For Musetta's splendid "Quando me'n vo," the ensemble gathers on a silverized Parisian street that looks like a black-and-white Doisneau shot come to life. Rodolfo (David Miller) and Mimi (Ekaterina Solovyeva) have terrific voices, and they're both eye candy: he's a young Belmondo to her Eva Marie Saint. When this Rodolfo first lays eyes on this Mimi, enough heat jumps between the two of them to melt the snowflakes. It makes you want to hop a plane to Paris—the Paris in Baz Luhrmann's mind. Note: Three rotating casts perform the lead roles. (Broadway, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. 212-239-6200.)

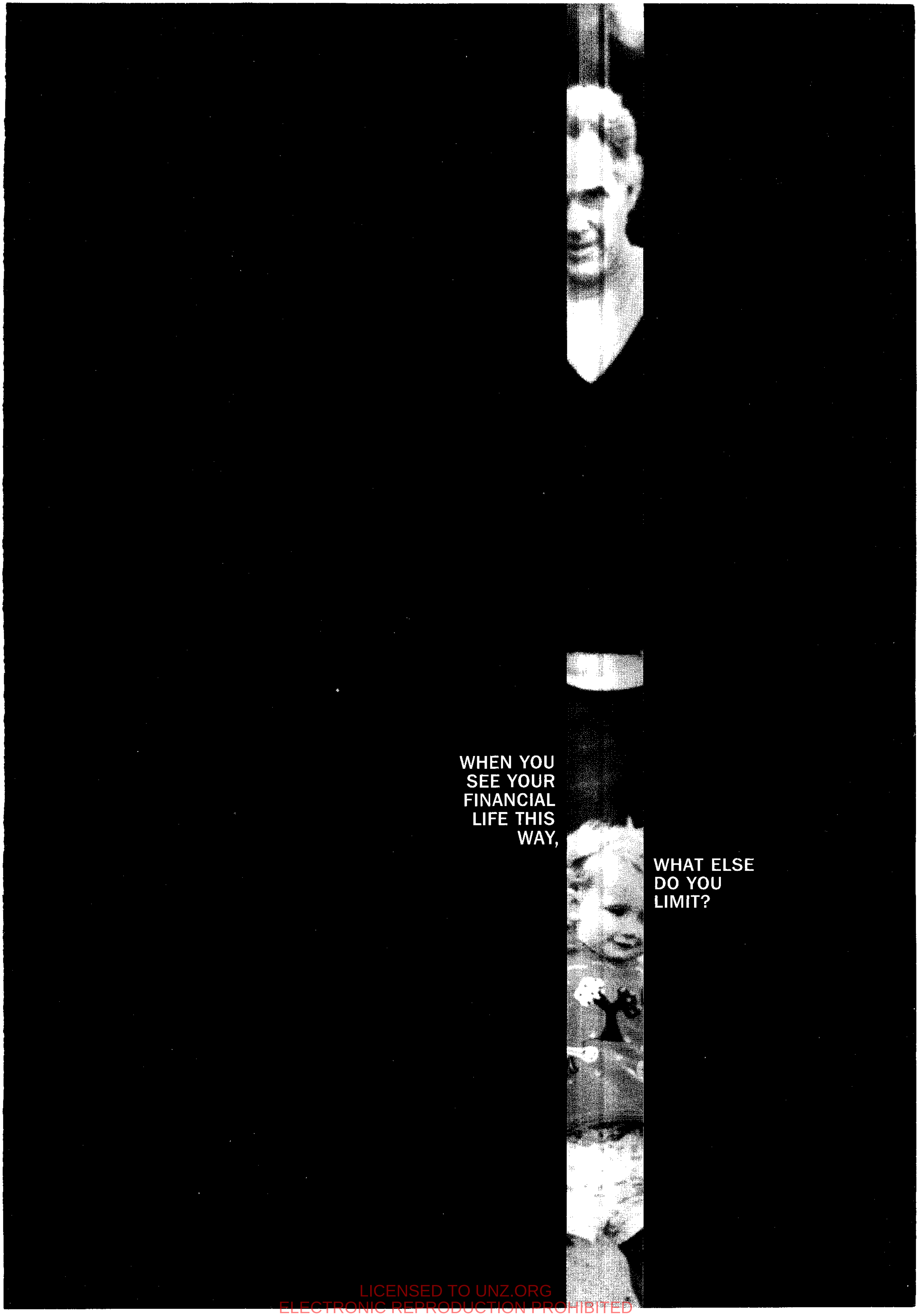
CLASS MOTHERS '68
Here is a show for every woman who has ever sacrificed for her kids, and every kid who should be grateful. Does that leave anyone out? On a clever set (designed by Beowulf Boritt) that shifts, scene by scene, into the living rooms and lives of six different mothers, Priscilla Lopez portrays all the moms—each made fully individual by Lopez's gift for accents and physical expression, each connected by anxiety over her child's impending high-school graduation. To echo the working mother's dilemma: However does she do it? Written by Eric H. Weinberger and directed by Jeremy Dobrish. (Clurman, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. Closes Feb. 9.)

COMEDIANS
Trevor Griffiths' 1975 play, revived by the New Group, has two frames. In the outer one—a satisfying tale of aspiration, success, and failure—a group of working-class comics in Manchester hone their craft with an old hand named Eddie Waters whose punch lines have lost their wallop. Waters, played by Jim Dale—who began his career as a comedian in British music halls—shows generous charisma, and the students' interrelation with him and with one another is interesting. But Griffiths' earnest inner frame—which charges that dark humor is immoral after the Second World War—leadens the lightness of the comedy around it. (Samuel Beckett, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. Closes Feb. 23.)

COOKIN' AT THE COOKERY:
THE MUSIC AND TIMES OF ALBERTA HUNTER
There is an electrifying scene in the Melting Pot's bio-musical of the blues singer Alberta Hunter: the whip-slim mimic Debra Walton—who plays Alberta as a little girl, and goes on to play a white nurse, an octogenarian club manager named Barney Josephson, and a hep-cat record producer named Chris Albertson—transforms herself in voice and expression into Louis Armstrong and accompanies Ann Duquesnay (as the grown Alberta) in a duet of "When the Saints Go Marching In." It's a preternatural accomplishment—Jane Horrocks meets Eddie Murphy. This is just one highlight of an exhilarating production, in which Duquesnay's singing (particularly of "My Handy Man Ain't Handy No More") and the duo's acting keep the audience rapt. Written and directed by Marion J. Caffey, with musical direction by George Caldwell. (Theatre 3, at 311 W. 43rd St. 212-279-4200.)

DEBBIE DOES DALLAS
This saucy, tongue-in-cheek musical, choreographed with extreme limberness by Jennifer Cody and directed by Erica Schmidt (who adapted it from the porn film), redefines "physical" comedy. When cheerleading captain Debbie (Jamie Day) is tapped to join the Texas Cowgirls, her squad takes on lubricious after-school jobs to help pay her airfare to Dallas. Played with po-mo brio by a gifted cast, including Day, Mary Catherine Garrison as a jealous fellow-cheerleader, Jeff Skowron as Debbie's quarterback heartthrob, and Ken Barnett as the mustachioed Señor Bradley. (Jane Street Theatre, 113 Jane St. 212-239-6200.)

DONMAR WAREHOUSE
"Twelfth Night" and "Uncle Vanya" have arrived from London to run in repertory at BAM. The ensemble cast includes Emily Watson, Simon Russell Beale, Helen McCrory, and Mark Strong. Directed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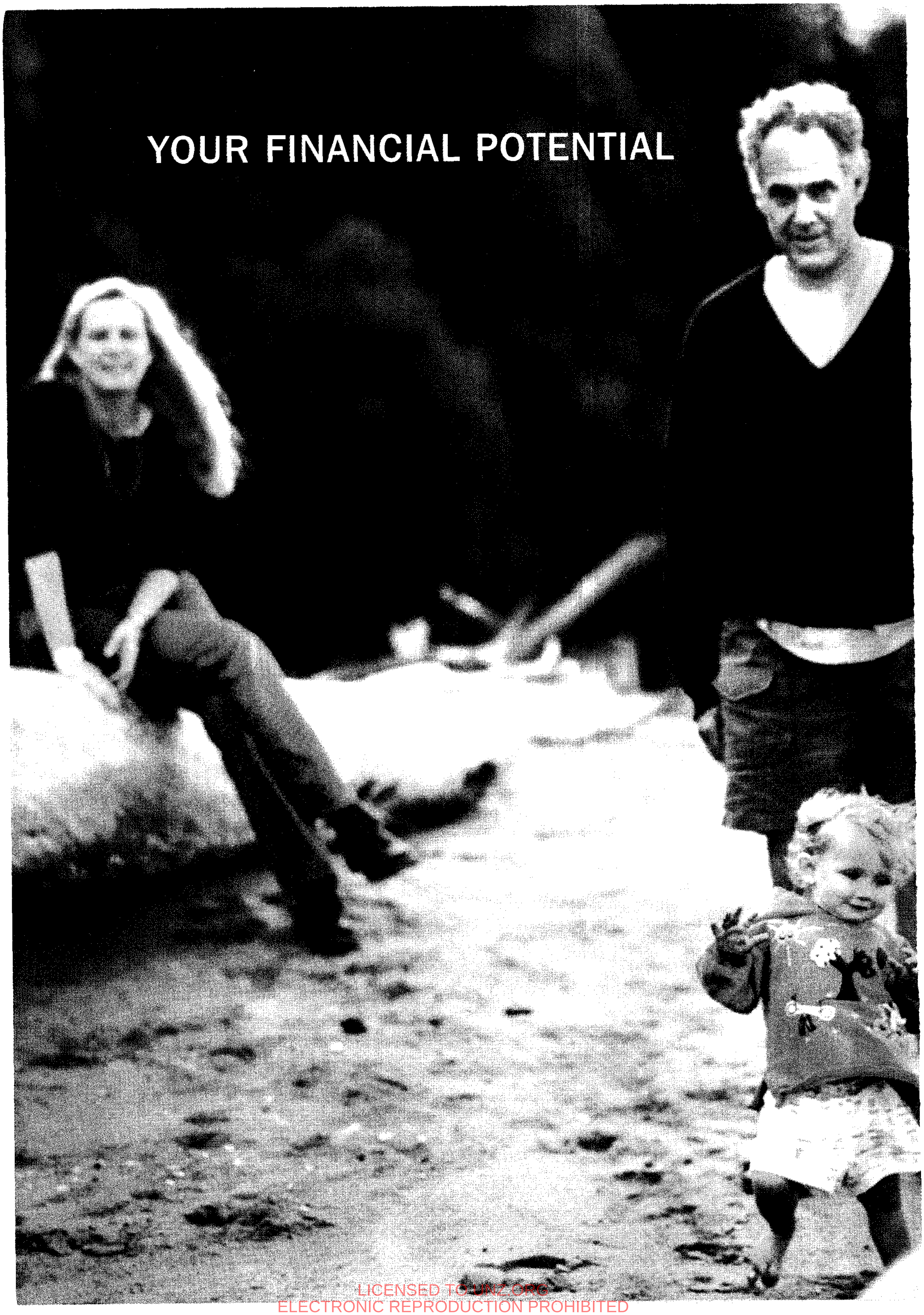

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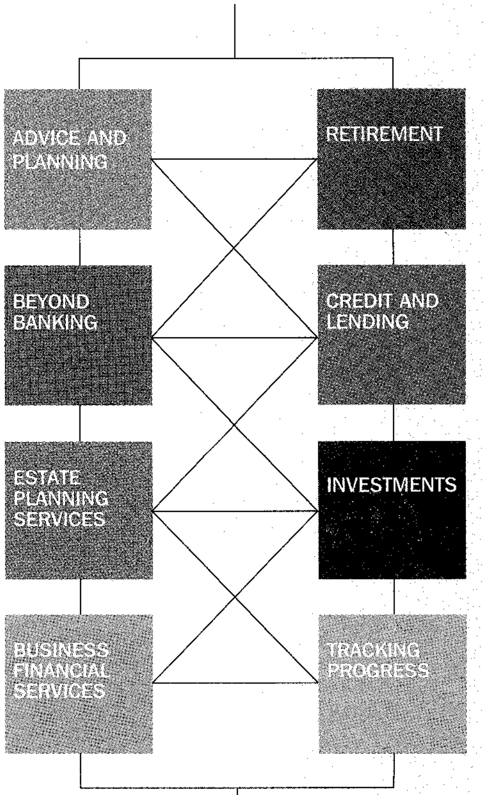
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by Sam Mendes. (Reviewed in this issue.) (BAM's Harvey Theatre, 651 Fulton St. 718-636-4100.)

FLOWER DRUM SONG
Part fashion show, part night-club act, part hymn to Asian-American diversity, David Henry Hwang's update of the 1958 Rodgers and Hammerstein show, set in San Francisco's Chinatown, works far better than the original. With snazzy direction and choreography by Robert Longbottom and vivacious dancing by Sandra Allen. (11/4/02) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 212-239-6200.)

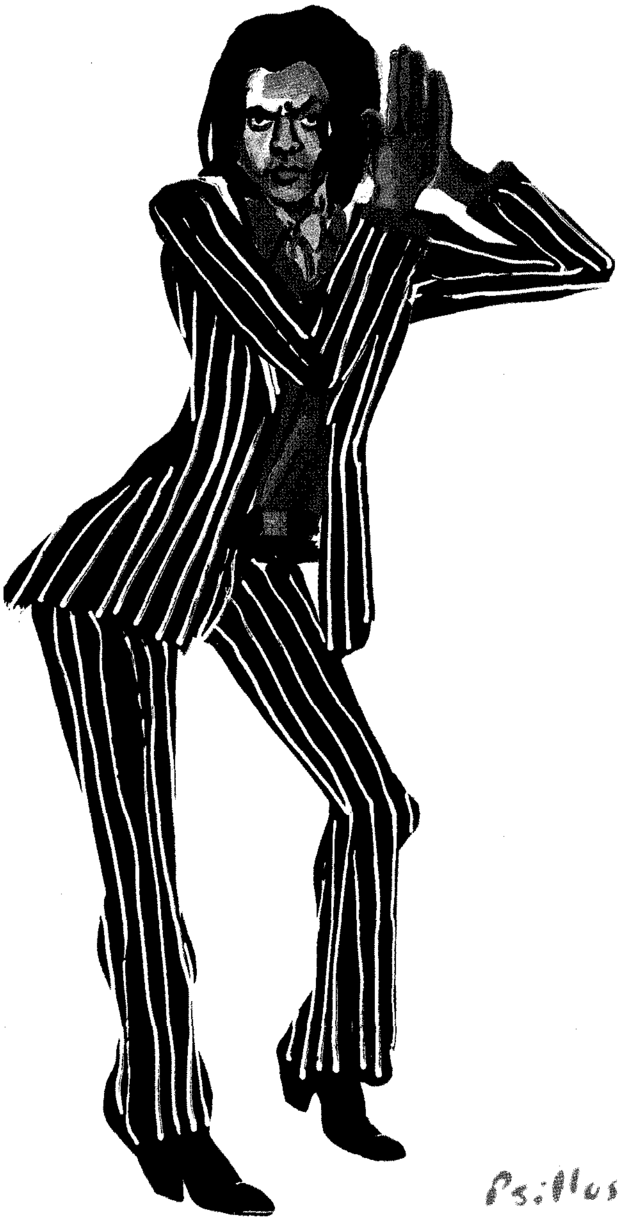
HANK WILLIAMS: LOST HIGHWAY
To sink any deeper into Hank Williams's blues, you'd need to hop into a pickup truck, drive to Nashville, and buy a bottle of J.D. In Randal Myler's beguiling musical biography of the hard-drinking, softhearted crooner, Jason Petty retraces Williams's journey from hardscrabble childhood to honky-tonk renown. The audience keeps him company all the while, tapping their toes even when he's so lonesome he could cry. (Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 212-239-6200. Closes Feb. 23.)

JULIUS CAESAR
In Karin Coonrod's urgent staging, Shakespeare's history opens with clashing cymbals as a projected image of the words "Julius Caesar" fades into an eerily modern backdrop. Men in dark suits and overcoats crowd around Caesar, tempting him with a newsprint crown as ticker-tape confetti swirls around their legs and blinding stadium lights flash. Douglas Stein's set, Catherine Zuber's costumes, and David Weiner's lighting all conspire to bring the lessons of hubris and betrayal to the present age of Internet bubble and political brinksmanship, and most of the players feel as contemporary as the set. Earl Hindman's Caesar has the bluster of a used-car salesman and is scarcely imaginable as a general, Daniel Oreskes' Cassius shows the petty perfidy of a Gordon Gekko, and Graham Winton's Mark Antony recalls a football buddy. They are outmatched by Thomas M. Hammond, whose stirring portrayal of Brutus is both timely and timeless, but in spite of his noble contribution, the play shows more grandstanding than gravitas. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 212-239-6200.)

MEDEA
In her daring modern interpretation of Euripides' drama, well directed by Deborah Warner, Fiona Shaw enters wearing sunglasses, a cardigan sweater, and a tidy summer dress, the picture of almost demure self-control. She has a lithe, muscular body and a sinuous mind to match, but she is a nervy woman pushed to the end of her tether, her mind and heart racing in adrenaline-pumping panic. (12/23 & 30/02) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 212-307-4100. Closes Feb. 22.)

MONSIEUR IBRAHIM AND THE FLOWERS OF THE KORAN
The Play Company presents a work by the French playwright Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt (with an English text by Stéphane Laporte) that depicts a friendship between a troubled Jewish boy and an Arab man in nineteen-sixties Paris. Directed by Maria Mileaf. Ed Vassallo stars. (McGinn/Cazale Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. 212-206-1515. Closes Feb. 16.)

PAINTED SNAKE IN A PAINTED CHAIR
The Talking Band's latest play takes a lively, knowing peek into the inner lives of five old friends on a typical afternoon, showing how intimate rituals and shared memories create social groups and drive individual behavior. Ellen Maddow's beautifully constructed script mixes song, wordplay, and dance (of a sort) with dramatic exposition in the group's signature style, deftly interweaving inner and outer reality. The production's serious concerns are revealed organically, without ever seeming dry or theoretical. Directed by Paul Zimet with nifty sound design by "Blue" Gene Tyranny. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 212-475-7710. Closes Feb. 2.)



The twenty-year-old Farruquito, the grandson of the great Spanish flamenco dancer El Farruco, was born with duende, the soul of the dance, and he proves it this week at the New York Flamenco Festival (see Dance).

DEMETRIOS PSILLOS

PANIC! (HOW TO BE HAPPY!)
In "Panic," the avant-garde director Richard Foreman revisits themes he has explored in previous work: the limitations of language, the way that a performance reshapes itself during viewing, and the differences between men and women and how their attempts to connect generally end in some kind of violence. Foreman is a true son of Gertrude Stein, whom he acknowledges as an influence. His actors repeat phrases, lending them a rhetorical rather than a literal meaning. One such phrase is, "Let's all join the misfit club." Another is, "We are here now, inside the behavioral center." Watching the four main performers who make up the nucleus of Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric Theatre—including the beguiling Elina Lowensohn—we know we're in the presence of an ensemble in the best sense of the word. The actors embody separate aspects of Foreman's dense, difficult, often hilarious mind, working together. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-533-4650.)

SHANGHAI MOON
In Charles Busch's swanning romp through thirties film conceits, set in Shanghai in 1931, Busch is Lady Sylvia Allington, a red-headed American temptress whose satin curves and breathy accent (somewhere in between Cary Grant's and Joan Greenwood's) captivate both her credulous, constipated husband, Lord Allington—fabulously rendered by Daniel Gerroll, who later doubles as an opium-smuggling pirate—and General Gong Fei, played by B. D. Wong, who makes his entrance in elaborate military dress, cracking a bullwhip. Every part is actor's taffy, from the Shanghai madam Mrs. Caroll (Becky Ann Baker) to Gong Fei's discarded concubine, Mah Li (Sekiya Billman), to the hunchbacked, long-whiskered temple attendant Dr. Wu, played with relish by Marcy McGuigan. As Queen Victoria averred in her review of "The Mikado," "The story is rather silly"—but that doesn't keep it from being wonderful, giddy fun. Directed by Carl Andress. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 212-633-9632.)

TARTUFFE
Henry Goodman is Tartuffe, Brian Bedford is his pious and deluded host, Orgon, and Kathryn Meisle is Orgon's wife in the Roundabout's revival of Molière's play. (Reviewed in this issue.) (American Airlines, 227 W. 42nd St. 212-719-1300. Closes Feb. 23.)

VINCENT
It's a shame that Robert Mitchell's curiously engaging musical about the life of Vincent Van Gogh does not have a grander forum, and that it has opened only a month ahead of "Vincent in Brixton," a big London production (without music) about the artist, bound for Lincoln Center. Mitchell's play is worth catching; the story is unforced, the lyrics are good and sometimes funny, and the whole thing is of a piece—not a patched-together effort but an organic unity, with as much to sing as to say. Even in a chilly theatre, the book, music, and lyrics succeed in holding the spectators' attention, aided by fine performances by Paul Woodson, as Vincent, and Mark Campbell, as his devoted brother, Theo. Directed by Judith Fredricks. (Wings, 154 Christopher St. 212-627-2961.)

LONG RUNS

ADULT ENTERTAINMENT
Variety Arts, 110 Third Ave. 212-239-6200.

AIDA
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 212-307-4747.

BARTENDERS
John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 212-206-1515.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 212-307-4747.

BLUE MAN GROUP
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 212-254-4370.

CABARET
Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 212-239-6200.

CHICAGO
Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)
Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 212-239-6200.

DE LA GUARDA
Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 212-239-6200.

THE EXONERATED
45 Bleecker Street Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. 212-307-4100.

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY: 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.

42ND STREET
Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.

FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE
Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

THE GRADUATE
Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

HAIRSPRAY
Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 212-307-4100.

I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 212-239-6200.

IMAGINARY FRIENDS
Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 212-239-6200.

THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.

MAMMA MIA!
Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-563-5544.

METAMORPHOSES
Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 212-239-6200. (Closes Feb. 16.)

LES MISÉRABLES
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

MOVIN' OUT
Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 212-307-4100.

OKLAHOMA!
Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 212-307-4100.

PERFECT CRIME
Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 212-695-3401.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

THE PRODUCERS
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

PUPPETRY OF THE PENIS
John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.

RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 212-921-8000.

RUSSELL SIMMONS' DEF POETRY JAM ON BROADWAY
Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200.

SAY GOODNIGHT, GRACIE
Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 212-477-2477.

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE
Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 212-307-4100.

TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING
St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 212-239-6200.

TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE
Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 212-307-4100.

URINETOWN
Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. 212-239-6200.

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
This week the company will perform Balanchine's "Ballade"—a duet set to Fauré's "Ballade for Piano and Orchestra" and performed with a complement of dancers from the corps—for the first time in a decade. Ballet master Sean Lavery—for whom Balanchine choreographed the dance in 1980—has taught it to Robert Tewsley, the company's newest principal dancer, who rehearsed the dance with Jenifer Ringer, his partner in his début principal performance last December, in "The Nutcracker," and to

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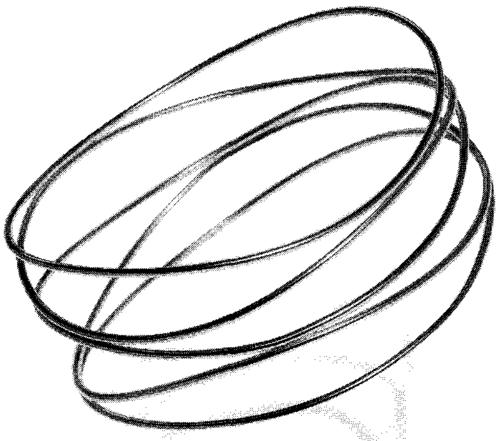

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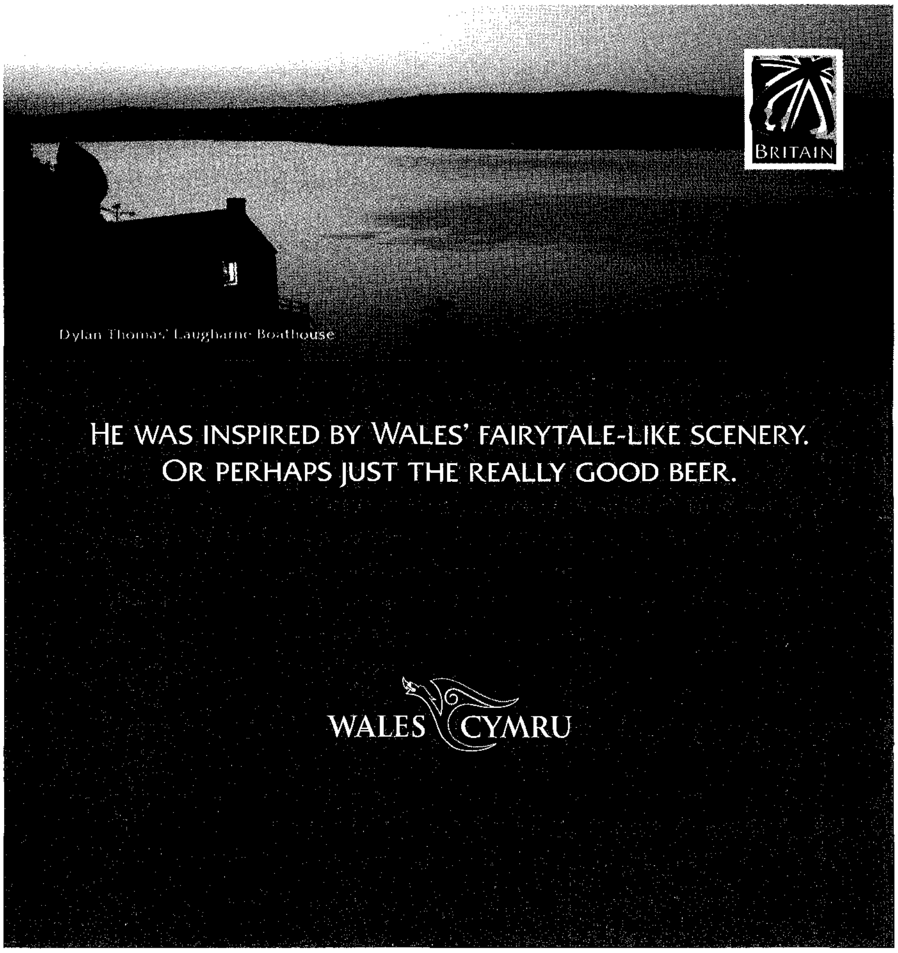

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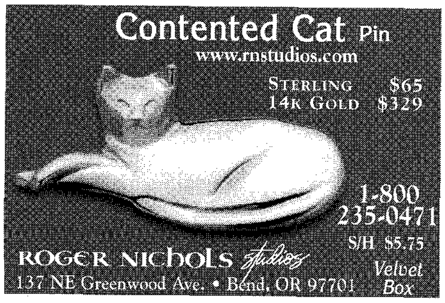

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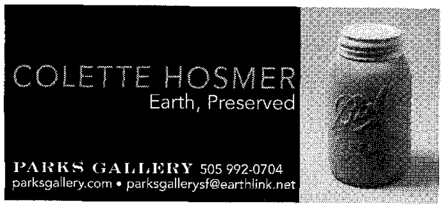

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Nikolaj Hübbe, who rehearsed with Wendy Whelan. The principal couples will split two weekend matinées. ♦ Jan. 29 at 8: "Bach Concerto V," "Eight Easy Pieces," "Eight More," "Haiku," and "Chaconne." ♦ Jan. 30 at 8: "Square Dance," "Piano Pieces," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." ♦ Jan. 31 at 8: "Mercurial Manoeuvres," "Burleske," "Sonatas and Interludes," and "Chaconne." ♦ Feb. 1 at 2: "Kammermusik No. 2," "Ballade," "Haiku," and "Symphony in C." ♦ Feb. 1 at 8: "Bach Concerto V," "Eight Easy Pieces," "Eight More," "Piano Pieces," and "Chaconne." ♦ Feb. 2 at 3: "Kammermusik No. 2," "Ballade," "Piano Pieces," and "Jeu de Cartes." ♦ Feb. 4 at 7:30 (an all-Balanchine program): "Concerto Barocco," "Valse-Fantaisie," "Variations pour une Porte et un Soupir," and "Symphony in C." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-870-5570.)

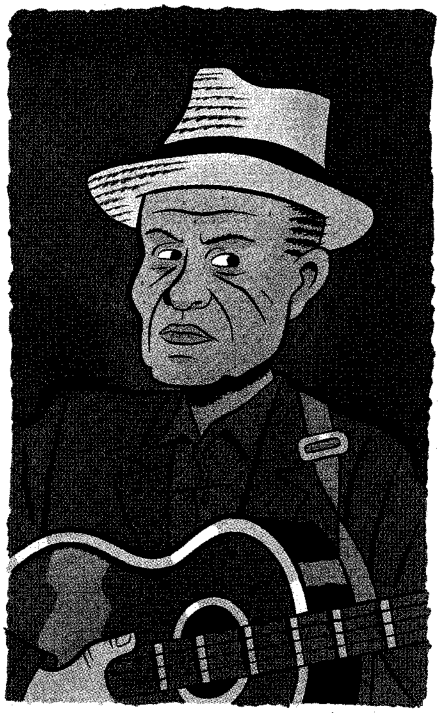
MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY
After a four-year hiatus, the company returns in fine form, having won a protracted legal battle over the rights to Graham's work. This is the second week of their two-week season at the Joyce. ♦ Jan. 29 at 8: "Embattled Garden," "Deep Song," "Diversion of Angels," and "Night Journey." ♦ Jan. 30 at 8: "Embattled Garden," "Deep Song," "Diversion of Angels," and "Chronicle." ♦ Jan. 31 at 8 and Feb. 1 at 2: "Phaedra," "Lamentation," "Diversion of Angels," and "Chronicle." ♦ Feb. 1 at 8 and Feb. 2 at 2: "Embattled Garden," "Satyric Festival Song," "Diversion of Angels," and "Night Journey." ♦ Feb. 2 at 7:30: "Phaedra," "Satyric Festival Song," "Diversion of Angels," and "Chronicle." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave. 212-242-0800.)

"ISADORA . . . NO APOLOGIES"
In a choreographed play written and directed by Andrew Frank, Lori Belilove performs Isadora Duncan's dances while Hope Garland (as Duncan) and Daryl Boling (as assorted lovers) reënact scenes from her life. (Duke, 229 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200. Jan. 29-Feb. 1 at 8 and Feb. 2 at 2.)

"GROUNDED"
With brown curls, bright eyes, and kiddish exuberance, Kara Tatelbaum looks like the heroine of a children's book—Really Rosie meets Olivia the piglet. Last spring Tatelbaum had surgery for a torn hip muscle, and last summer, while recovering, she began to choreograph a dance that let her express herself even when she couldn't move fully. The result is "Grounded," now premièring at the Joyce SoHo, in which Tatelbaum wriggles in and out of layers of clothing without once moving her feet from the floor. The evening also features earlier works, including the duet "After the Math," about a couple (Justin Jones and Ashley Gilbert) involved in a charged moment of decision-making, and excerpts from "Erasing the Thin Blue Line," a trio (with Jones, Gilbert, and Alexander Gish) about boundaries. In both dances, Tatelbaum uses precise shifts of position and hand gestures to signal changing dynamics. (Joyce Soho, 155 Mercer St. 212-334-7479. Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at 8.)

NEW YORK FLAMENCO FESTIVAL
Like most arts with a long history, flamenco has its traditionalists and its modernizers. In their third annual festival dedicated to the form, the World Music Institute offers both. Thursday's gala features a tapas assortment of dancers: the seasoned Manolete, the campy Antonio Canales, the intense Juana Amaya, the young sensation Farruquito, and Farruquito's even younger brother, Farruco. On Friday and Saturday, Sara Baras and her twenty-two-member company present "Mariana Piñeda," a flamenco ballet adapted from the García Lorca play about a revolutionary martyr in nineteenth-century Andalusia. On Sunday, Farruquito and Amaya return with *flamenco puro*, the improvised, virtuoso give-and-take between dancers, singers, and musicians who seek to bare their very souls. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212. Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at 8 and Feb. 2 at 7.)

"TRICK SADDLE"
Jenny Rogers and Clove Galilee lassoed three other strapping female cowpokes to create this butch-grrrl rodeo homage to the mythic American horseman. The skits and shoot-'em-ups are laced together with a lighthearted water-ballet video by Rogers, who also directs, and live music by Allison Cornell. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 212-477-5288. Jan. 29-Feb. 1 at 8:30 and Feb. 2 at 5. Through Feb. 9.)



ROCK 'N' ROLL ADULT *Garland Jeffreys came of age in the late sixties, in hock to Bob Dylan and in the company of Lou Reed, but it wasn't until the following decade that he broke through, as part of the tide of post-punk troubadours that included Elvis Costello and Joe Jackson. His high-water mark remains the 1977 album "Ghost Writer," which includes the hit "Wild in the Streets," but Jeffreys, who plays Joe's Pub on January 31, hasn't stopped exploring the links between rock, race, and rebellion.*

SETH

"ARTURELLA"
The Arthur Aviles Typical Theatre joins the rotating roster of performers in Dance Theatre Workshop's "Carnival" series with a revival of "Arturella"—a Cinderella story set in the South Bronx that includes murder, mayhem, Spanglish, Kabuki, and Santería. The gleeful Arthur Aviles, who plays the title role and choreographed the hour-long piece, stays true to Walt Disney's "Cinderella" on many counts; he uses the music and also transposes the movement of the animated characters to the bodies of his fourteen-member cast. Alberto Dennis and Keila Cordova play the grimacing stepsiblings with terrific commitment, and dancers playing birds, a cat, a dog, and wide-eyed mice chase each other in circles throughout the production. The group also performs "The Speed of Sight," a quieter, non-narrative work about communities in times of war and peace. (219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. Jan. 29 at 7. Through Feb. 16. Please call the box office for the full "Carnival" schedule.)

"CROWD PLEASER"
Michael Moore should see Pat Catterson's dance "Broken," in which Pascal Rekoert, a six-foot-plus, sinuous Dutchman, dances with a revolver—caresses it, chucks himself under the chin with it, and mock-cocks it at a fashion model (Michele Curtis) as he struts to the jazz anthem "After You've Gone." "I see him as the sickness of someone in love with a gun," Catterson explains. "Broken" is one piece in an evening of dances on the theme of the individual's fight against the herd mentality, called "Crowd Pleaser." In another piece, "Quiet," twenty members of Catterson's company stand still on the stage, then

disperse in noisy, repeated waves, like flocks of birds. As the tumult recedes, the soloist, Helen Hansen, is left alone. Her face a model of angelic symmetry, she begins a serene, measured dance. Catterson's troupe is remarkable qua group; even when they move en masse, they act as individuals. In this piece, each of them adopts gestures copied from newspaper photos Catterson collected—of Northern Alliance fighters, urban widows, men in prison, and, in one case, Janet Reno. (Construction Company, 10 E. 18th St. 212-924-7882. Feb. 2 at 6 and 8 and Feb. 3 at 7 and 9.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

NEIL FINN
One of the premier singer-songwriters to emerge from the New Wave movement of the nineteen-eighties, this New Zealander cut his musical teeth in the quirky Split Enz before achieving greater State-side success with Crowded House. Since disbanding that group, in 1996, Finn has taken the solo path, though his work is still steeped in affable, sparkling pop. With **Rhett Miller,** who is on a break from his career as the voice and songwriter for the good-time country outfit the Old 97's. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 212-840-2824. Jan. 29-30 at 8.)

DAVID GRAY
This Welsh troubadour, with his taste in up-to-date rhythms and his boyishly photogenic looks, is one of the kings of adult alternative pop. (Madison Square Garden. 212-307-7171. Jan. 31 at 8.)

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER
It's extraordinary that **Toshiko Akiyoshi** has kept her big band going now for thirty years. Her level of creativity and invention has grown with the orchestra's evolution from daring experiment to contemporary mainstay. To mark the anniversary, Akiyoshi premières a work featuring the *taiko* drummer **Eitetsu Hayashi. Maria Schneider** shares Akiyoshi's visionary take on the big band and looks to have similar gumption as well; despite commercial lulls, she's kept her orchestra together. She, too, presents new work. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-721-6500. Jan. 31-Feb. 1 at 8.) ♦ There's no way that you haven't heard the violinist **Mark O'Connor,** whether it was on a James Taylor recording, in a classical throw-down with Yo-Yo Ma, or on one of the myriad releases for which he was the session fiddler (O'Connor has appeared on nearly five hundred albums). With all of that work, it's no surprise that this always-in-demand stylist only rarely gets to indulge in one of his great passions: the hot jazz typified by his mentor Stephane Grappelli. The trumpeter **Wynton Marsalis** and the vocalist **Jane Monheit** join O'Connor's trio to crank up the star wattage, but as his new album, "In Full Swing," proves, he doesn't require their presence to produce the needed heat. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 4 at 8.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—Jan. 31-Feb. 1: Soul Brother No. 1, **James Brown.**

BOTTOM LINE
15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (212-228-6300)—Jan. 31: **Olu Dara** is a Mississippi-born avant-garde jazz cornettist who's also proven adept at the blues guitar. Feb. 1: The veteran keyboardist **Al Kooper** celebrates his fifty-ninth birthday with a rare solo show.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—Jan. 30-31: The college-rock favorites **Rainer Maria.** With **Mates of State** on both nights and **Palomar** on the second. The fast, catchy tunes of this local foursome give pop-punk a good name. Their cover of Brian Eno's blissed-out song "I'll Come Running" puts an energetic spin on a New Wave classic. Feb. 1: The full-on funk of the **Antibalas Afrobeat Orchestra.**

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FEZ
380 Lafayette St. (212-533-7000)—Jan. 29: A onetime indie-rock wunderkind, the singer-songwriter **Ben Lee** first garnered buzz a decade ago with his junior-high-aged punk band Noise Addict, before launching a promising solo career that became somewhat overshadowed by his romance with Claire Danes. Back to reclaim his momentum, Lee is here for two consecutive Wednesday nights. The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (212-777-6800)—Jan. 29: **Bonnie (Prince) Billy,** a.k.a. the Louisville, Kentucky, native Will Oldham, returns to New York with songs from his new record, "Master and Everyone." Oldham has recorded under many pseudonyms, but his voice cannot be mistaken for anyone else's: it's a warbly whisper that makes him sound like he's confessing his sins. Oldham accompanies himself on acoustic guitar, and others (often his brothers) join in on mandolin, banjo, bass, and organ. A typical song (although there are none) evokes the feeling of eating a pie in a farmhouse while discussing the death of an old friend. Ever since declaring himself the Bonnie Prince, Oldham has been sabotaging his golden-boy looks by growing bushy beards and, in concert, revealing his paunch. He succeeds in being gnarly, twisted, and original. Jan. 31-Feb. 1: Recalling an era before MTV neutered the threatening elements of punk rock, California's **AFI** (the acronym for the somewhat earnest name A Fire Inside) are anthem-happy revivalists who keep the proceedings furious and passionate.

Palomar warms up the Bowery Ballroom with its youthful power pop.

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—Jan. 31: **Garland Jeffreys.** The veteran soul rocker returns, backed by a trio. Don't worry if you miss him here; at the end of the month he brings his full band to the Village Underground for two nights of vintage New York rock. Feb. 3: The downtown guitarist **Gary Lucas** joins the pi-pa player **Min Xiao-Fen** for an evening of mid-twentieth-century Chinese pop songs.

MAKOR
35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000)—Feb. 1: **Tony Trischka,** one of the world's finest banjo players, stops by with his band.

MERCURY LOUNGE
217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700)—Feb. 1: It's a curious phenomenon that's been going on for years: the most genuinely American acts achieve overseas success while remaining unknown at home. The latest example is **My Morning Jacket,** whose reverb-saturated country rock is lauded in places like Belgium but has only recently started to attract notice here. With the backcountry ballads of **Canyon.**

PIANOS
158 Ludlow St. (212-505-3733)—Feb. 4: Nashville's **Venus Hum** makes spacey pop full of the blips and beats of an eighties-era video game, along with the gauzy voice of front woman Annette Strean. Thanks in part to a slot on producer Larry Tee's Electroclash tour and the accompanying word of mouth (the group opened for Stereolab when they played Music City), Venus Hum scored a record deal. Their major-label début album, "Big Beautiful Sky," which sounds like a kind of cross between Björk and Soft Cell, is set for release this spring.

S.O.B.'S
204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (212-243-4940)—Jan. 29-30: The sex-kitten languor and wacky New Age spirituality of the unmatched soul singer **Erykah Badu.** Jan. 31: The funk-rocker **Cody Chesnutt.** Dining.

VILLAGE UNDERGROUND
130 W. 3rd St. (212-777-7745)—Jan. 31: Manhattan's **Skeleton Key** is a propulsive rock outfit specializing in lurching rhythms and torrents of metallic clanging.

WARSAW
261 Driggs Ave., Brooklyn (718-387-0505)—Jan. 30: Top-shelf Americana from Minneapolis's **Jayhawks,** who will be performing an acoustic show.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080)—Jan. 29: The Italian saxophonist **Stefano Di Battista's** Blue Note recordings spotlight an agile bop player with a warm romantic streak. Jan. 30: The **Bronx Horns** pay tribute to two great American bandleaders, Tito Puente and Horace Silver. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (212-475-8592)—Through Feb. 2: The last time the poetic West Coast-based saxophonist **Charles Lloyd** played this club was during the week of September 11, 2001. The lingering effects were reflected on his most recent recording, the stirring "Lift Every Voice"; this return visit, with the pianist **Geri Allen** and the guitarist **John Abercrombie,** is certain to have its share of drama and deep sentiment.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—Through Feb. 2: Having played behind everyone along with his brother (and sister) during the past four decades, the bassist **Buster Williams** is lately leading his own compact bands. The drummer **T. S. Monk,** at the helm of a sextet, rounds out this double bill. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—Jan. 28-29: As an often-in-demand bassist (notably as musical director for Cassandra Wilson), **Lonnie Plaxico** has been keeping bandstands swinging for years now; his own ensemble should reflect his more adventurous leanings. Jan. 31: **Curtis Lundy** has also maintained the bottom line for singers of note, including Betty Carter and Carmen Lundy, his sister; he's here with a solid mainstream quintet. Feb. 1-2: The manicured harmonies of the **Four Freshmen** found their way into the vocal approach of the Beach Boys and others who appreciated their precision and sophisticated, airy sound. It's been a long time since graduation, but these still game, now-mature schoolkids are eager to revive memories. Dining.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (212-219-3055)—Jan. 30: From Louis Armstrong and Red Allen to Wynton Marsalis and Terence Blanchard, a number of great trumpeters have sprung from the rich musical soil of New Orleans. Which is just one reason to follow **Irving Mayfield,** a younger, much touted Big Easy scion. He's here with his quartet and new music from "Half Past Autumn Suite," a specially commissioned work inspired by the photographer Gordon Parks, who plays piano on part of the album.

NO MOORE
234 West Broadway. (212-925-2901)—Starting Jan. 30: What musical grand tour **Charlie Hunter** will take his custom nine-string guitar on is anyone's guess these days, but it's certain that the jazz tradition as we know it isn't on the itinerary. A month-long residency on Thursday nights will give him plenty of opportunity for exploration.

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—Through Feb. 2: The **Fred Hersch** trio. That his new record, "Live at the Village Vanguard," is one of the most satisfying recordings of this superb pianist's career should make you want to rush over to the scene of the inspiration. Hersch's intimate communication with the bassist **Drew Gress** and the drummer **Nasheet Waits** puts a beautiful new spin on standards and makes the leader's lyrical originals gleam. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-879-5500)—**"Leonardo da Vinci, Master Draftsman"** surveys more than a hundred drawings by the Renaissance man. Through March 30. ♦ In the visual arts, the first surge of self-conscious black achievement came in the thirties, spurred by the financial support of the W.P.A. The seventy-odd prints and paintings of **"African-American Artists, 1929-1945"** showcase the period's anecdotal temperament. Outsiders like Bill Traylor and Horace Pippin look as appealing as ever, but the majority of the work here feels hampered by its own honorable intentions. Seeing Jacob Lawrence in this context, you suddenly appreciate how far he rose above the folksy piety of his peers, both black and white. Through May 4. ♦ **"The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353."** From a show named after a man on the move, you'd expect what? Gilded tent flaps? They're here, but the focus is on an urbane, nearly hundred-year dynasty that was founded in Iran by Hülegü, a grandson of Genghis. Ceremonial and decorative objects and lots of illustrated manuscripts—not to mention dauntingly profuse curatorial wall texts—document a cosmopolitan milieu in which Islamic styles got infused

with Chinese ideas. Educational. Through Feb. 16. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)
33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City (212-708-9400)—**"Masterworks of German Expressionism"** presents twenty prints by members of the Brücke group, including Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Emil Nolde, and Max Pechstein, as well as artists working between the World Wars, such as Max Beckmann and Käthe Kollwitz. Through Feb. 24. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

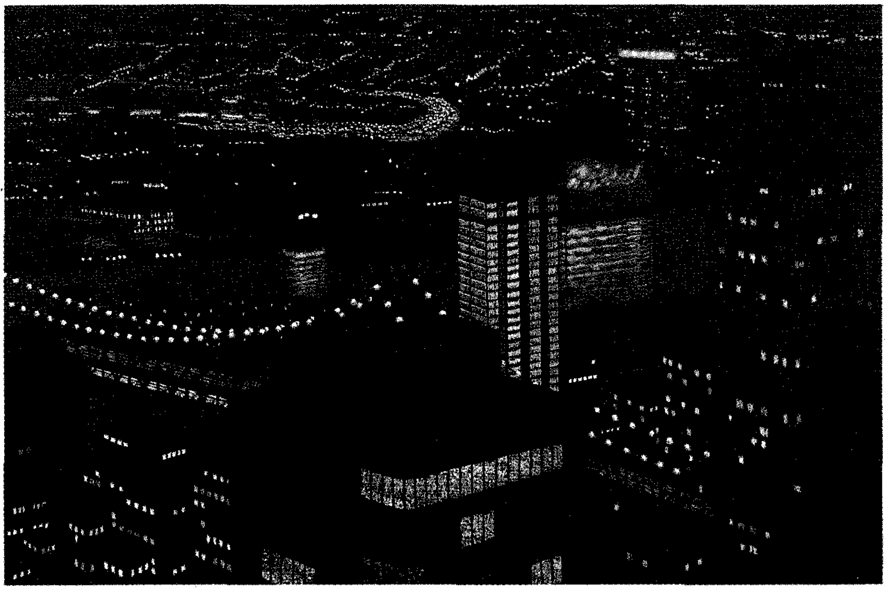
GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—Selections from the permanent collection are on display. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3676)—Although Gee's Bend, Alabama, is isolated by poverty and a sharp curve in the Alabama River, the group of hamlets there has for generations fostered quilt-making as a virtuoso performance in frugality. Sixty-nine hand-sewn quilts, dating from the thirties to the present and incorporating a wild variety of geometries, colors, and fabrics, are on view. Though the women of the African-American community—many of them members of the local Pettway clan—quilt and sing together (a documentary film showing continuously in the gallery broadcasts the sewing circles' amazing harmonies), no two quilts are alike. Each woman has a fiercely individual approach. The visual compositions are electric with abstraction of the most visceral sort, aesthetically inventive and born of necessity. Through March 9. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART
Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—Judy Chicago's monumental installation **"The Dinner Party"**—a delta-shaped banquet table for thirty-nine worthies from Primordial Goddess to Georgia O'Keeffe—comes from an era when women were wimmin. When the piece was completed, in 1979 (with the help of more than four hundred needleworkers and ceramicists), the sexual equipment pictured in the banquet plates shocked viewers, who found it either too explicit or too reductive. The work languished in storage. Now part of the museum's permanent collection, it looks wonderful—brilliantly colorful, poignantly bygone, but nevertheless a bona-fide triumph of scale and allegory. Through Feb. 9. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

DIA CENTER FOR THE ARTS
548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566)—Jo Baer, a major control freak of high minimalism in the nineteen-sixties, responded to Donald Judd's Kennedy-era death-of-painting dicta by proving that oil on canvas could be as thuddingly self-evident as any box. She made dead-flat expanses of white or gray with crisp black or color-striped borders on thick stretchers. The paintings, wonderfully installed here, emit an undimmed, Arctic glamour and do much to bring the seventy-three-year-old painter back from undeserved obscurity. The later works are blocky, inexplicable paintings hung below knee level. Lovely prints from 1974, based on language systems, end this imperturbable show. Through June 15. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

NEUE GALERIE
1048 Fifth Ave., at 86th St. (212-628-6200)—**"Dagobert Peche and the Wiener Werkstätte."** When Peche died, in 1923, at the age of thirty-six, Josef Hoffmann, the founder of the Wiener Werkstätte, declared him "Austria's greatest genius in ornamentation since the days of the Baroque." As this sugarplum of a show reveals, Peche's designs sought to "overcome utility." He ardently believed that form should disguise function, not follow it. His irresistible flair for decorative embellishment is evident in every object, from a small silver box in the shape of a pumpkin topped with a curlicue of tendrils to a red-and-yellow cabinet with pyramid finials that looks like a collaboration between Michael Graves and Marie Antoinette. Through Feb. 10. (Open Fridays, 11 to 9, and Saturdays through Mondays, 11 to 6.)



Yvonne Jacquette's "View of Queens with Pepsi Reflection II," at DC Moore.

GALLERIES-UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

SUZANNE CAPORAEL
The "Shallow Water Dictionary" may not sound like a promising muse, but it inspired this series of luminous abstract paintings based on estuaries. Bands of salty, bright color flow in intricate arrangements against pale, freshwater grounds. Each canvas refers to a specific location, from Ireland's Derrymore Marsh (jittery bars of coral and orange with grace notes of emerald green) to Admiralty Inlet in British Columbia (strips of midnight, lavender, and jonquil below an expanse of pearl gray). Through Feb. 15. (Artemis Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 212-445-0444.)

JAY DAVIS
Is that Wile E. Coyote looking down on a postapocalyptic scene of green-slime-covered buttes, as a Transformer's mask peers out from a corner? Davis's stoner paradise of hidden and suggested faces, connect-the-dots constellations, and iridescent mandalas in darkly surreal landscapes is looser and more adventurous than his recent architectural painting. The dystopian perspective of these new works might be unnerving if they weren't so safely rooted in boyish pop culture; their visions of hell feel more like the daydreams of a teen-age comic-book junkie. Through March 1. (Mary Boone, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 212-752-2929.)

AGNES MARTIN
Within the pale confines of her signature style, Martin has come up with a show that feels almost rugged. She has exchanged the prim Baby Gap pastels of her last exhibition for thin transparent washes that wander shakily from their ruled guidelines. One painting is provocatively close to being blank. The effect is less comforting and more Spartan, a sort of low-fat version of Martin's assertive blandness. Through Feb. 24. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 212-421-3292.)

ANNE TRUITT
One of the vexations of Truitt's resurgence is that no one can agree about what to call her. She was never a minimalist exactly, but no other term fits comfortably. Then there's the question of installation. Her slim colored pedestals are conceived singly, but one responds to them as groups, almost as three-dimensional paintings arranged across the gallery floor. These latest examples are as sturdy and beguiling as ever, essays in a kind of serene, unideological formal austerity. Through Feb. 8. (Danese, 41 E. 57th St. 212-223-2227.)

"LIKENESSES & LANDSKIPS"
A feast of Tory fops, shrewd burghers, and unreal, willowy backgrounds, this lavish show proves that Colonial portraiture is a weirder and more fascinating realm than we'd expect. The centerpiece is a Charles Wilson Peale portrait of the flamboyantly staid George Washington. There is also a wide selection of work by Trumbull, Feake, Earl, and the prodigiously talented J. S. Copley, who defected to England in 1774. One of his late English pictures, of languorously slumping aristocratic siblings, may stir up residual anti-redcoat sentiment. Through Feb. 8. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. 212-535-8810.)

Short List

ARMAN
Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 212-541-4900.
Through Feb. 1.

DIANE EDISON
George Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 212-644-5665.
Through Feb. 8.

YVONNE JACQUETTE
DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.
212-274-2111. Opens Feb. 4.

RAYMOND PETTIBON
Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. 212-517-8677.
Through Feb. 15.

GALLERIES-CHELSEA

TIM GARDNER
The watercolorist shows dozens of new pictures, made from snapshots of loutish young men and other lumpen American types at home, at play, and on vacation. The limpid realism of his technique dazzles. His subjects now include landscapes and cityscapes, often in dramatic weather—hitting high notes of the sublime to go with his lower register of sunlit suburban banality. But a loss of focus is apparent. The sense of Gardner as a satiric bard of the middle class—exciting in past shows—has gone fuzzy. He seems increasingly seduced by his own virtuosity, with results that verge on generic Photo-Realism. He may be just another good artist, after all. Through Feb. 22. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 212-255-1121.)

DONA NELSON
This impertinent master of the New York big painting keeps solving stylistic problems that you didn't know existed, veering between representation and abstraction. In this show, there are mountain landscapes in graphite on canvas, in one case augmented with modelling paste, sand, and slathered acrylic. There are also insouciantly ugly abstractions in relief, made with skeins of cheesecloth plastered to

the canvas. Most wonderful are grand, tensile compositions in graphite and charcoal, like X-rayed de Koonings. In the fourth decade of her never predictable career, Nelson is painting like a house on fire. Through Feb. 9. (Cheim & Read, 547 W. 25th St. 212-242-7727.)

RAYMOND PETTIBON
"Follow me!—I'm the artist. I don't think we've met." So goes one text, accompanying the image of a torchbearer, in a two-gallery onslaught of poem-drawings by Pettibon, art's Eminem. There is little evident advance from the artist's early work (from the eighties) at Zwirner & Wirth to his recent stuff at David Zwirner, apart from more use of ugly, grabby color. Pettibon keeps subjecting crude visions of art, sex, religion, and baseball to finely phrased, cracked clarities of thought. He is demonic and modest, and given to delicate regrets: "This evening, and indeed all this day, I ought to have been reading and filling the margins of Malthus." Through Feb. 8. (David Zwirner, 525 W. 19th St. 212-727-2070. See also Uptown Short List.)

Short List

JEAN-MARC BUSTAMANTE
Matthew Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 212-243-0200.
Through Feb. 15.

CHARLES HENRI FORD
Algus, 511 W. 25th St. 212-242-6242.
Through Feb. 1.

IÑIGO MANGLANO-OVALLE
Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 212-633-6999.
Through Feb. 15.

SHAHZIA SIKANDER
Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. 212-929-2262.
Through Feb. 8.

ERIC WESLEY
Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 212-206-7100.
Through Feb. 1.

GALLERIES-DOWNTOWN

BRUCE CONNOR
"Gluing the world down and making it mine" is how Connor describes his practice of collage. The ten etchings from 1972 in this show are based on a group of never-shown collages from the sixties. (Dealers refused to exhibit them unless Connor, who attributed the series to his friend Dennis Hopper, admitted they were his.) The images were cut from nineteenth-century engravings and reassembled into a hallucinatory world (reminiscent of Max Ernst's) where duellists have wagon wheels in lieu of heads and giant penguins play ring-around-the-rosy by the light of a crescent moon. The next best thing to dreaming. Through March 1. (Inglett, 100 Wooster St. 212-343-0573.)

GARY HUME
This ten-foot-tall "Back of a Snowman"—two white enamel spheres representing a verso view of a Frosty figure, from all sides—is the descendent of generations of Hume's self-destructing snow-and-food-coloring sculptures. Its message is contradictory. As a faceless mascot, it fits all too well into this courtyard surrounded by blacktop and high-rise and floodlit at all hours, but its elusive promise of cheer also makes it a happy misfit. Through April 20. (Ritz-Carlton Battery Park, 2 West St. 212-206-6674.)

DAVID RABINOWITCH
A knockout installation of a hundred monotypes from 1962 (exhibited here for the first time) and seven sculptures made between 1968 and 1976. The gravity of the solid-steel sculptures installed directly on the floor—sober investigations of density and mass—sets up an exquisite tension with the airy monotypes and their simple palette of primary and secondary colors. The prints were made with woodblocks carved by Rabinowitch into the same elemental shapes used in his sculptures, but the sculptures are obdurate, and the prints have a Matisse-like grace that hints at the cutouts hiding in their chunky forms. Through March 1. (Blum, 99 Wooster St. 212-343-0441.)

Short List

DAVID HAMMONS
Ace, 275 Hudson St. 212-255-5599.
Through Feb. 1.

MEL KENDRICK
Nolan/Eckman, 560 Broadway. 212-925-6190.
Through Feb. 8.

DAVID SCHER
Koenig, 249 Centre St. 212-334-9255.
Through Feb. 12.

PHOTOGRAPHY

BERND AND HILLA BECHER
This German husband-and-wife team is justly famous for their forty-year project obsessively photographing water towers, blast furnaces, silos, and other gigantic metal things they have referred to as "anonymous sculptures." But if you're looking to see their stark, iconic representations of industry, you'll be in the wrong gallery. Here the Bechers show—for the first time—photographs of a whole enterprise rather than its components. Instead of a grid of vaguely varying cement mixers, you'll get houses spilling down a forested hillside toward a menacing factory that sits on a sludgy river. It's unnerving to see how little seems to have changed in these landscapes, but liberating to see how the Bechers' approach to them has. Through Feb. 15. (Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. 212-627-1018.)

TABLES FOR TWO

PAZO
106 E. 57th St. (212-752-7470)—"I wasn't sure this was a restaurant. With all the latticework and these Moroccan pillows, it looked like a chic decorator's shop," said a woman whose midwinter tan and Chanel suit suggested that she knew a chic decorator or two. Getting up from the pillows where she had been waiting for her companion, she bumped her head on the turbanlike shade of a ceiling lamp. "That's a mistake," she said to the hostess who led her into the dining room, where still more latticework and pillows awaited her.

The chef at Pazo, Patricia Yeo, successfully borrowed from Pacific Rim cuisine at AZ, in the Flatiron district. In midtown, she turns to the Mediterranean basin to give patrons a taste of the old spice routes without actually booking anyone's cruise to Tangier. Yeo and her co-executive chef, Pino Maffeo, are big on bold contrasts, the more the merrier, and the results are mixed. Recent successes include a surprisingly well-married soup of curried red lentils and fennel, a chicken tagine accompanied by a coriander-spiked couscous, and a brilliantly orchestrated paella of duck confit, seafood sausage, and jumbo shrimp, in a rice pilaf. But other dishes—the smoky grilled octopus in a spicy orange reduction; cannelloni of duck confit, mushrooms, and winter vegetables; and bacon-wrapped monkfish with arugula and oxtails braised in harissa—read better than they taste. Desserts, the best of which may be the silky Catalan cream with beignets, tend toward the rich and fussy. The noise, in the low-ceilinged, intimate space, is tolerable, and a note in the menu discourages the use of cell phones.

But if the food is variable, it all looks designer-great. When the Chanel-suited woman ordered a "torchon" of foie gras and homemade fig newton as a starter, a bas-relief of an exotic flower arrived, the roots and bud joined by a stem of thickened balsamic vinegar. "It's beautiful," the woman said, "but is it edible?" (Open for lunch and dinner. Entrées $18-$36.)

—Charles Michener

EDWARD BURTYNSKY
The shapes, patterns, and scale of these images, depicting landscapes that have been transformed by the oil industry, briefly distract the viewer from the destructive process inherent in drilling. A shimmering pipeline cuts a geometric maze through a serene, forested terrain. Expansive fields of monochromatic, earth-toned, mechanized rigs seem chaotic, yet also disciplined. Who knew there'd be so many crisscrossing power lines in the middle of an oil field? Not a single human is seen in these expanses, which gives the photographs the eerie semblance of functioning ghost towns. However, Burtynsky contrasts the enormity of such industrial terrain with traces of those who've changed it so radically: roads, tire tracks, and what at first glance seems to be a Tonka truck. Through Feb. 8. (Cowles, 537 W. 24th St. 212-925-3500.)

THOMAS FLECHTNER
This Swiss photographer has been working close to home, but seemingly only when there's so much snow on the ground that he can't get to the airport to head for sunnier climes. The hotels, highway underpasses, and apartment houses look unreal; the lighting and the snow conspire to create a forbidding sense of silent isolation. Flechtner must have a heavy-duty parka, because he also shows a series of color prints for which he strapped lights onto his skis and created patterns—straight lines, circles, dashes—in the snow with the shutter of his camera open for as long as fourteen hours. Despite the bravura "How did he do it?" factor, these images are gorgeous and humbling at the same time. Through Feb. 1. (Kennedy Boesky, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-741-0963.)

ELIZABETH HEYERT
Heyert's nearly life-size black-and-white prints are voyeuristic portraits of people engaged in the typically private act of sleeping. Isolated on a stark black background, each sleeping subject and unconscious gesture seems primed for Dr. Rorschach. Some couples are entwined in what could be the fetal embrace of twins, others don't touch and seem alone in the midst of their togetherness. Single sleepers appear to be floating, paused in the midst of a languid jig or pirouette, poised with confident nonchalance or vulnerable and lost. Heyert then projected these images onto ancient Sicilian ruins and rephotographed them. The resulting flesh—multitoned swirls of speckled, cracked stone—conjures thoughts of human fragility and impermanence even if the sleepers have become heroic sculptures rising from a deep slumber. Through March 1. (Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. 212-750-7070.)

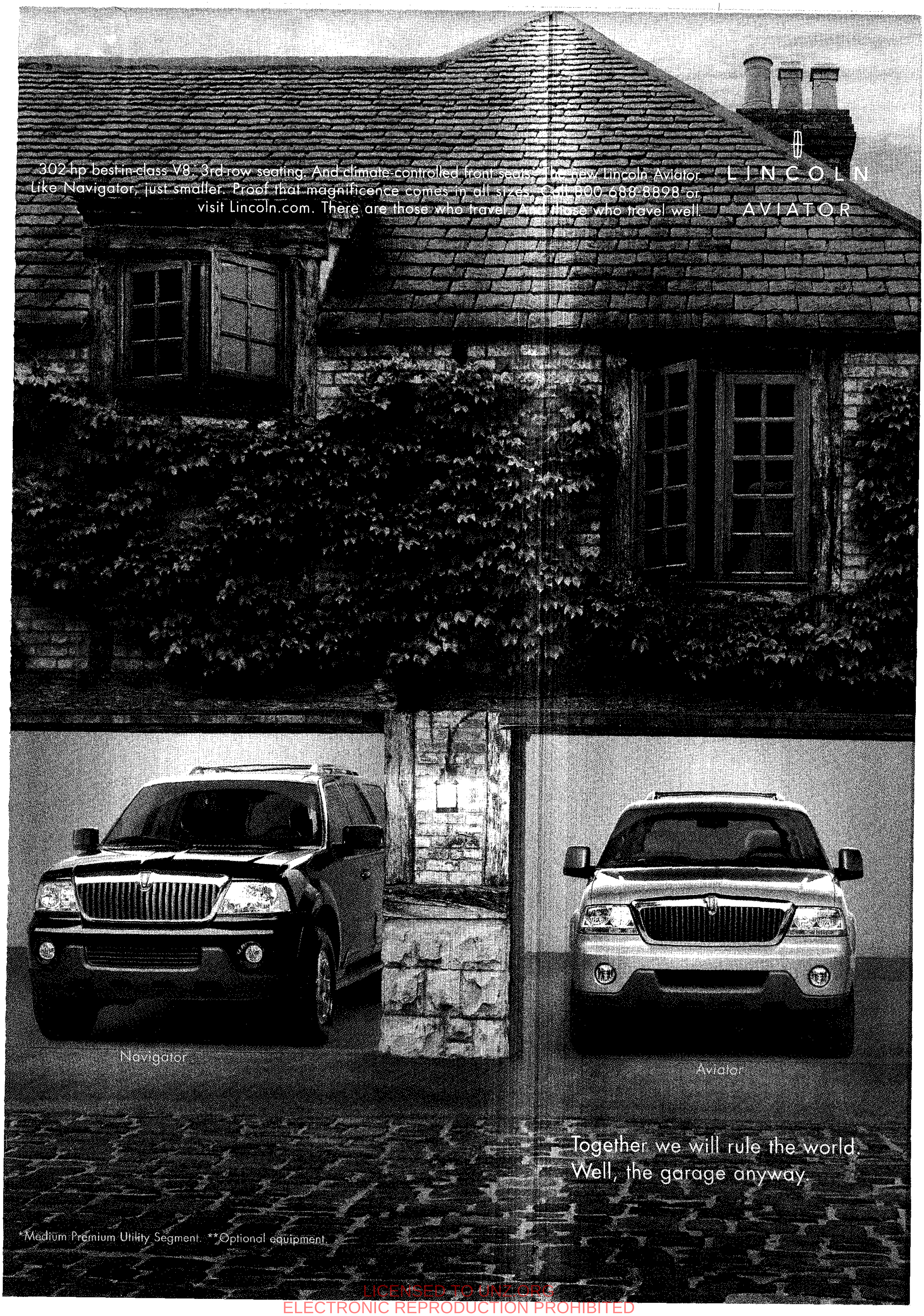
MICHAEL KENNA
Unlike the Japan of other contemporary photographers, for whom depicting that country means capturing the teen-age excess and neon bustle of Tokyo, Kenna's Japan is comprised of lonely, expansive landscapes, so empty as to appear not just a world but an era apart from the country's cities. Kenna is best known for his shadowy, big-sky architectural landscapes, but the intimate images here are restrained and exquisitely calibrated, as spare, misty, and elegant as a Chinese scroll painting. In one, the sky and the sea roil in a gray light so dreamy and diffused that it appears less a photograph and more a painting rendered in watery inks. Indeed, there are calligraphic elements in many of these photos, which seems appropriate for an artist who, rather than merely documenting a landscape, has captured the very essence of Japanese aestheticism. Through March 1. (Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave. 212-989-7600.)

Short List

"WEEGEE'S TRICK PHOTOGRAPHY"
International Center of Photography, 1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 212-857-0000. Through Feb. 16.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

SOTHEBY'S
Jan. 30 at 10:15 A.M. and 2 and Jan. 31 at 10:15 A.M.: "Arcade" furniture, carpets, and decorations, a selection of items selling for moderate prices. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.)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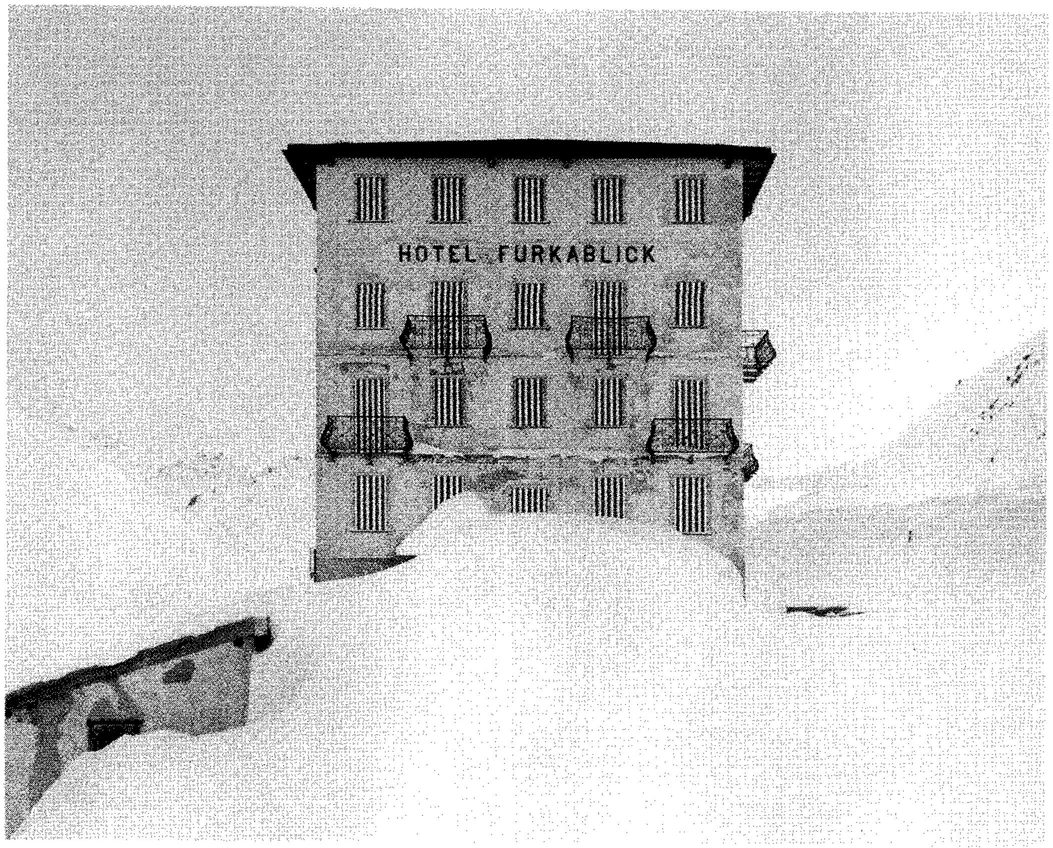
SWANN
Jan. 30 at 10:30 A.M.: Posters from the worlds of aviation, travel, winter sports (including a sleek Carl Kunst creation in blue, white, and gray from around 1905, promoting a Swiss ski company), commercial products, and the circus, along with a bevy of Art Nouveau posters by Mucha (featuring "Fall," one of his "Four Seasons" series from 1896, expected to bring up to twelve thousand dollars) and other artists. (104 E. 25th St. 212-254-4710.)



Thomas Flechtner's "Furka, 1998," taken high in the Swiss Alps, at Kennedy Boesky (see Photography).

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA
The final two performances of Sonja Frisell's breathtaking 1988 production of **"Aida,"** with Hasmik Papian, Dolora Zajick, Richard Margison, Mark Delavan, and Eric Halfvarson; Marco Armiliato conducts. (Jan. 29 at 8.) ♦ With Robert Lloyd replacing Halfvarson. (Feb. 1 at 8.) ♦ Olivier Tambosi's new production of **"Jenůfa,"** set in a towering old mill, aims to take Janáček's provincial tragedy into the realm of Sophocles, and with a uniformly powerful cast led by Karita Mattila in the title role and Deborah Polaski as her stern stepmother, Kostelnicka, it almost succeeds. Musically, the performance, conducted by Vladimir Jurowski, could scarcely be improved. Missing in the stylization of the acting and the symbolism of the stage design (including the most obtrusive rock in the history of the Met) is a quality essential to Janáček's quirky power—his buoyancy in the face of horror. (Jan. 30 and Feb. 3 at 7:30.) ♦ Franco Zeffirelli's stately 1990 production of **"Don Giovanni,"** with Sondra Radvanovsky, Melanie Diener, Anna Netrebko, Peter Mattei (in the title role), Rainer Trost, Ferruccio Furlanetto, Patrick Carfizzi, and Eric Halfvarson (as the Commendatore); Sylvain Cambreling conducts. (Jan. 31 and Feb. 4 at 8.) ♦ Mozart's **"Die Entführung aus dem Serail,"** with Alexandra Deshorties, Jennifer Welch-Babidge, Paul Groves, Barry Banks, Kurt Moll, and Matthias von Stegmann (in the speaking role of Pasha Selim); James Levine. (Feb. 1 at 1:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 212-362-6000.)

NEW YORK GRAND OPERA
Verdi, in later life, described **"Alzira,"** his eighth opera, as *proprio brutta*, or really ugly, and most of the world has been glad to go along with his lacerating self-assessment: perhaps no Verdi opera is so seldom staged. This compact, fast-moving work may lack dramatic richness (the sketchy plot, taken from a Voltaire play, concerns the misadventures of some Spanish nobles amidst the noble savages of sixteenth-century Peru), but it still has plenty of musical excitement. Maria Knapik, Valeria Girardi, Edward Perretti, Ping Yu, and Andrew Martens take the leading roles; the redoubtable Vincent La Selva—who has a more authoritative command of Italian style than almost any conductor in New York—is the music director. (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Jan. 31 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
In his last appearances with the orchestra until May, Lorin Maazel conducts a program of symphonies by Mozart (the "Prague") and Mendelssohn (the "Reformation") along with Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major (with Radu Lupu). (Jan. 30 at 7:30 and Jan. 31 and Feb. 1 at 8.) ♦ In a Saturday-matinée performance, Maazel leads the Philharmonic in an all-Mendelssohn concert, featuring the "Midsummer Night's Dream" Overture, a repeat of the "Reformation," and a chamber performance of the Octet for Strings. (Feb. 1 at 2.) (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-875-5656.)

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA
For this magnificent orchestra to select the forty-two-year-old Austrian maestro Franz Welser-Möst as its new music director surely makes sense: his Central European background, impeccable musicianship, and firm temperament place him in the grand tradition of Christoph von Dohnányi and George Szell. He will doubtless be an able custodian of the ensemble's lapidary sound—though a sampling of his recordings reveals a conductor more interested in precision and discipline than in bold interpretive decisions. His programming is commendably broad, however, and his first Carnegie Hall concerts as music director will show off the orchestra's elasticity and range. Feb. 1 at 8: Dmitri Mitropoulos's string-orchestra arrangement of Beethoven's Quartet in C-Sharp Minor, Op. 131—a piece long associated with Leonard Bernstein—leads off the first program, which continues with Strauss's "Death and Transfiguration" and "Four Last Songs" (with Felicity Lott). ♦ Feb. 3 at 8: Welser-Möst hands the reins to the pianist Mitsuko Uchida, who plays and conducts an all-Mozart concert (the Serenata Notturna and the Piano Concertos Nos. 20 and 21). ♦ Feb. 4 at 8: Welser-Möst returns to lead a program of Schwertsik, Schubert (the Symphony No. 2 in B-Flat Major), and Johann Strauss II (a bouquet of waltzes and polkas). (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Through Feb. 6.)

HUNGARIAN NATIONAL PHILHARMONIC
Right on the heels of the Budapest Festival Orchestra comes Hungary's other leading orchestra, led by the conductor-pianist Zoltán Kocsis, one of the country's most renowned musicians. Kocsis may have an adventurous streak (he conducted the first Hungarian performances of "Gurrelieder" in 1999), but for the orchestra's Lincoln Center début he's selected a concert of national favorites by Liszt ("Les Préludes" and the Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major), Bartók (the Dance Suite), and Kodály (the Háry János Suite). (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-721-6500. Feb. 2 at 3.)

THE MET ORCHESTRA
James Levine leads the ensemble, and several of its principal players, in double concertos by Mozart (the Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola) and Brahms (the Double Concerto for Violin and Cello). An estimable guest artist, Arcadi Volodos, joins the orchestra for Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto. (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Feb. 2 at 3.)

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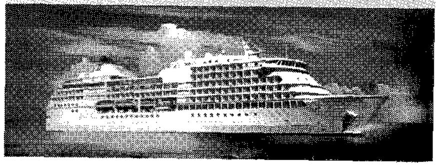

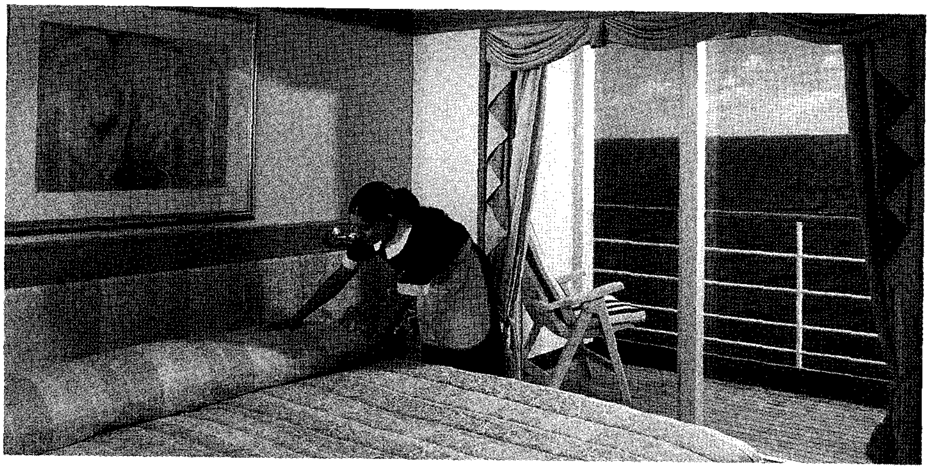

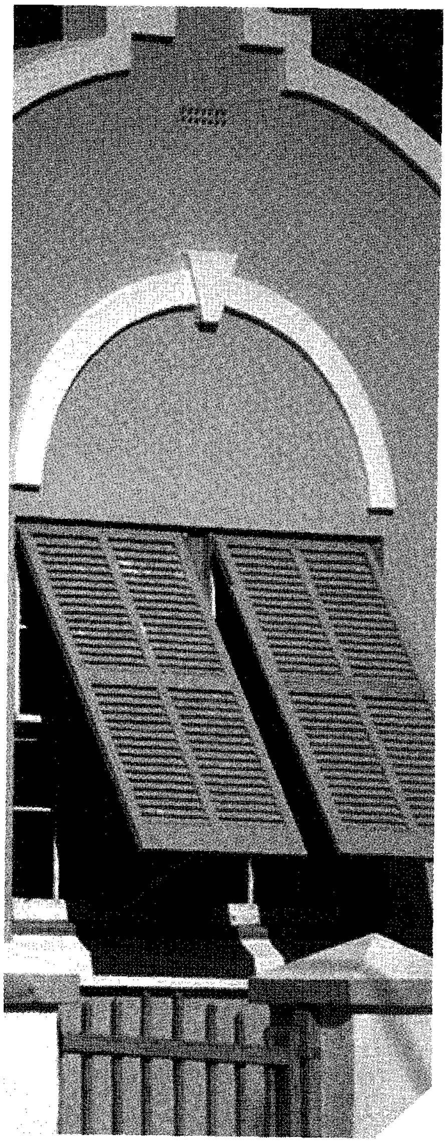

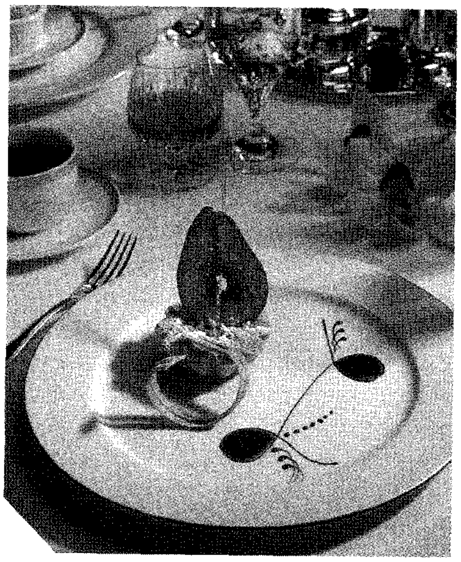

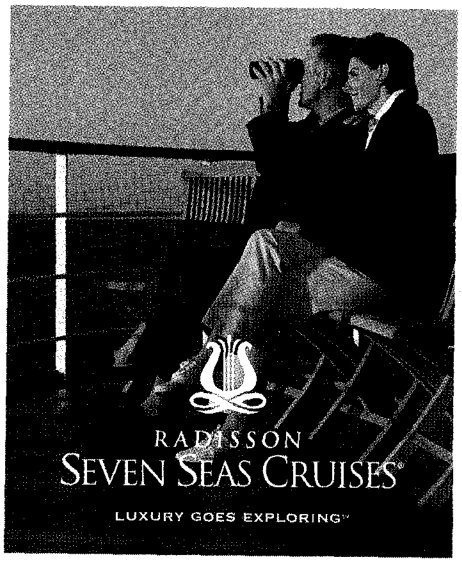

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RECITALS

EMMANUEL PAHUD AND HÉLÈNE GRIMAUD
The flutist and the pianist play arrangements of violin sonatas by Schumann (the Sonata in A Minor, Op. 105), Mozart, and Franck, along with Poulenc's Sonata for Flute and Piano. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500. Jan. 29 at 8.)

FOCUS! FESTIVAL: "BEYOND THE ROCKIES"
New Yorkers, always a little smug about their city's role as a new-music powerhouse, have a valuable opportunity to broaden their appreciation of the American scene by sampling this year's installments of the conductor Joel Sachs's annual festival with the New Juilliard Ensemble. These are the final concerts; music by Lou Harrison, the genial eighty-five-year-old patriarch of West Coast composers, graces all of them. Jan. 29 at 8: Chamber works by such composers as Yumiko Morita, Gordon Mumma ("Five from the Sushi Box"), and Dane Rudhyar, along with Harrison's "Varied Trio." ♦ Jan. 30 at 8: Works in the classical tradition by Krenek and Kirchner (the Duo for Violin and Piano) complement a program of music by Henry Cowell (three piano pieces), Janice Giteck ("Agrarian Chants"), and others. ♦ Jan. 31 at 8: Reinbert de Leeuw, a Dutch maestro with a gift for drawing out daring and detailed performances of modern scores, conducts a final orchestral concert, with the Juilliard Symphony and Choral Union. The program, which includes works by Schoenberg (the gripping "Survivor from Warsaw"), Adams, and Chinary Ung, begins and ends with music by Harrison ("A Parade" and the "Elegiac" Symphony). (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 212-769-7406.)

MERIDIAN ARTS ENSEMBLE: "EXTREME NEW YORK"
Many young classical ensembles like to dabble in works in the more edgy contemporary styles, but this brass-and-percussion group—like the Kronos Quartet—lives with such music year-round. All the composers in their Merkin Concert Hall recital (Milton Babbitt, Nick Didkovsky, David Sanford, and John Halle) have strong links to rock or jazz—and all the works are Meridian commissions. (129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. Jan. 29 at 8.)

"INTERPRETATIONS" SERIES
An impressive band of new-music stalwarts (including the clarinettist Michael Lowenstern and the Flux Quartet) participate in a concert of electronic music by Larry Austin (best known for his realization of Ives's unfinished "Universe Symphony") and James Dashow. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. Jan. 30 at 8.)

BARGEMUSIC
Jan. 30-31 at 7:30: Mark Peskanov and Steven Beck perform four of Beethoven's sonatas for violin and piano. ♦ Feb. 1 at 7:30 and Feb. 2 at 4: The pianist Orion Weiss and the cellist André Emilianoff join Peskanov for a concert of Bach, Schumann (the Fantasy, Op. 17), and Brahms (the Piano Trio in C Major). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

EIGHTH BLACKBIRD
This Wallace Stevens-inspired new-music group may presently be the ensemble-in-residence at the music departments of Northwestern and Chicago, but lately they've shown a pronounced attraction to music by the four young bats-out-of-Yale who make up the Minimum Security Composers Collective. Their latest program consists of "Di/Verge," an evening-length collaborative work commissioned by the ensemble. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 212-570-3949. Jan. 31 at 8.)

CLEMENTI MARATHON
It's hard to overstate the importance of Muzio Clementi (1752-1832), the Anglo-Italian composer, pianist, teacher, publisher, and piano manufacturer whose influence in all these areas lasted well into the nineteenth century. Since his copious piano works cross the bridge from the Classical to the Romantic eras (he had a decisive influence on the young Beethoven), this five-hour concert, presented in commemoration of Clementi's two-hundred-and-fiftieth birthday (featuring such musicians as Gilbert Kalish, Kenneth Cooper, Brian Zeger, Seymour Lipkin, and Audrey Axinn), will feature performances not only on a modern Steinway but also on a Broadwood from 1804, and a square grand piano made by the Clementi firm in 1796. (Elebash Recital Hall, CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Ave. Feb. 1 at 1. For free tickets, which are required, call 212-817-8607. ♦ Note: A panel discussion on the composer, featuring such academic luminaries as Leon Plantinga and Kyle Gann, precedes the concert, at 11 A.M.)

ZEHETMAIR QUARTET
The violinist Thomas Zehetmair, who enjoys a major solo career, may be the first among equals in his recently formed string quartet, but he has inspired all three of his colleagues to play with the provocative, protean expressivity that he shares with so many of today's most distinctive young virtuosos. They certainly have the right touch for Schumann (whose quartets they've recently recorded on ECM), giving his music a liquid, seamless flow that's charged with an incisive awareness of structural detail. The composer's Quartet in A Minor starts off their concert at the 92nd Street Y, a program that also includes music by Cage and Bartók (the Quartet No. 5)—all of it played from memory. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500. Feb. 1 at 8.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER
Stalin and his successors didn't take to killing or imprisoning composers (Russia's writers fared far worse), but each musician of talent had to make painful choices, which "Masterpieces of the Russian Underground," the Society's festival of concerts, lectures, films, photographs, and poetry readings, will explore. Its final concert, a tribute to five of the most distinctive artists to come from the far-flung provinces of the old Soviet empire, features contemporary music by Pärt, Kancheli, Gubaidulina ("Meditation on a Bach Chorale"), Ashot Zohrabian, and Fardzh Karayev; the performers include the clarinettist David Shifrin, the violist Paul Neubauer, and the great Soviet émigré pianist Vladimir Feltsman, the festival's organizer. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-875-5788. Feb. 2 at 5. For the Society's complete schedule of events, see its Web site, www.chambermusicsociety.org.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

READINGS
Jan. 30 at 7: The BigSmallPressMall, a new alliance of four independent literary publishers, celebrates its launch with readings by Peter Richards (Verse), Ben Greenman (McSweeney's), Tina Brown Celona (Fence), and Sam Lipsyte (Open City). (Housing Works Used Book Café, 126 Crosby St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ Jan. 31 and Feb. 1 at 8: As part of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's "Masterpieces of the Russian Underground" series, the poets Mark Strand and Lev Losev read from the works of Anna Akhmatova and Joseph Brodsky, and the poets Glyn Maxwell and Vladimir Gendelsman read from the works of Marina Tsvetayeva and Osip Mandelstam. A number of contemporary Russian poets will also be present each evening. (Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building. 212-875-5788.) ♦ Feb. 3 at 8: The writers Lan Samantha Chang, Jonathan Safran Foer, and Barry Raine read from new and previously published work. Joyce Carol Oates will provide the introductions. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500.)

TALKS
Jan. 31 at 6:30: The architect Enrique Norten discusses his design for the new Brooklyn Public Library's Visual & Performing Arts Library, which is to be built in downtown Brooklyn. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. For more information, call 212-980-3767.) ♦ Feb. 3 at 7: The novelist A. S. Byatt talks about her new novel, "A Whistling Woman," with the filmmaker Philip Haas. The actor Claire Bloom will start things off with a reading from Byatt's book. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 212-864-5400.) ♦ Feb. 4 at 8: The cultural critic Camille Paglia considers images of women in Hollywood. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500.)

BOOK CURRENTS

The Keys to Success

In **A PIANIST'S LANDSCAPE** (Amadeus), Carol Montparker quotes Martha Argerich as saying, "I love to play the piano, but I hate being a pianist." Alone onstage and performing from memory, a piano soloist probably has the loneliest, most nerve-racking job in music. Boris Berman's **NOTES FROM THE PIANIST'S BENCH** (Yale) offers an illuminating program of technical tips culminating in advice on what he calls the "technique of the soul," a method of consciously learning a series of emotional responses that reliably situate the performer inside the spirit of a piece. Drawing on Stanislavsky's theories of acting, Berman explains that "during the emotional high of an inspired performance a pianist should never cease listening to an objective inner monitor that guided him through hours of preparatory work."

RICHARD McGUIRE

One contemporary pianist famous for listening to his inner monitor is Alfred Brendel. In his recently published conversations with Martin Meyer, **ME OF ALL PEOPLE** (Cornell), translated from the German by Richard Stokes, Brendel recalls the enviable confidence of his early career: "I went on stage, played and did not realize what fear was." The main challenge, he says, lies in balancing fidelity to the work itself with personality and spontaneity. When things go well, "one has the impression that the work is playing itself." And, according to Charles Rosen's **PIANO NOTES** (Free Press), a good performance occurs not in spite of technical trials but sometimes even because of them: "There has to be a genuine love simply of the mechanics and difficulties of playing, a physical need for contact with the keyboard, a love and a need which may be connected with a love of music but are not by any means totally coincident with it."

—Leo Carey

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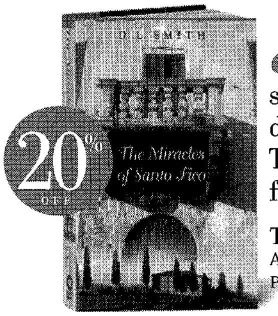

“At last he went upstairs and for the first time in many years he slept in his own bed in his own room. But that night Leo didn't dream about frescoes or Chicago or baseball or nameless women. That night he dreamt of when he was a boy, and he helped his father harvest the grapes.”

The Miracles of Santo Fico – *D. L. Smith*
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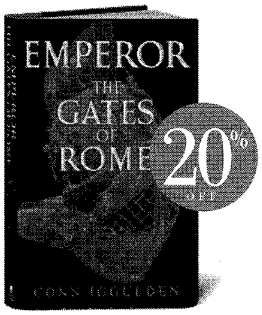

“Marius's voice was a croak, and he tried again, finding strength. 'First-Born. There is no dishonor. We were not betrayed but attacked by Sulla's own men left behind. Now, if you love me, if you have ever loved me, *kill them all and burn Rome!*'”

Emperor: The Gates of Rome – *Conn Iggulden*
A NOVEL OF ANCIENT ROME
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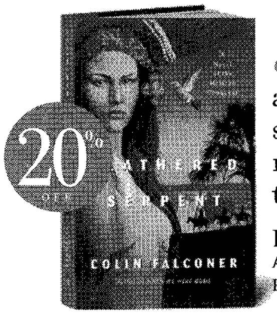

“*A god!* He has corn silk hair and blue eyes, and his skin is pale, almost pink. The *cacique* had ordered us to keep our eyes lowered, so as not to offend the Lords of Thunder, but I have to look, I cannot help myself. As we women gather in the shade of a ceiba tree, the strange creatures cluster around us. *There, another god!*”

Feathered Serpent – *Colin Falconer*
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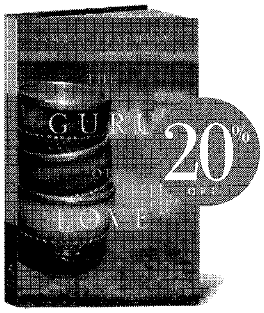

“Ramchandra sat still, hardly breathing. Then he slid off the chair and knelt in front of Goma. He held her hand, and a great sob escaped from him. She reached out and tousled his hair, then drew him close to her breast. 'I am nothing compared to you, Goma,' he said. 'Shhhh.'”

The Guru of Love – *Samrat Upadhyay*
A STORY OF LOVE AND DESIRE IN CONTEMPORARY NEPAL
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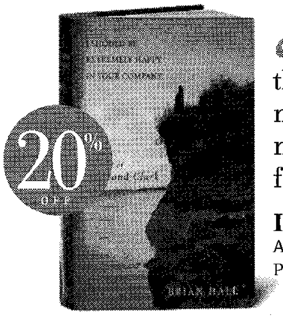

“So quick bright things. Lewis asks himself, months later, when the gleam came off the world. It is midwinter. He cannot be sure; memory is so treacherous. Climbing the last slope of the continental divide, drinking from the Missouri where it sprang chaste from its source—surely that was a golden moment. Wasn't it?”

I Should Be Extremely Happy in Your Company – *Brian Hall*
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MOVIES OPENING

BIKER BOYZ
A young upstart (Derek Luke) challenges the leadership of a veteran rider (Laurence Fishburne) in an action movie set in the world of African-American motorcycle clubs. With Lisa Bonet, Orlando Jones, and Kid Rock. Opening Jan. 31.

CHAOS
Coline Serreau's drama documents the fallout after a prosperous Parisian couple (Catherine Frot and Vincent Lindon) witnesses the beating of a prostitute (Rachida Brakni). In French. Opening Jan. 29. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

FINAL DESTINATION 2
In this sequel to the 2000 supernatural thriller, a group of people cheat death thanks to a young woman's premonition, only to be stalked by a malevolent force. Opening Jan. 31.

THE GURU
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening Jan. 31.

THE LAST LETTER
Frederick Wiseman directed this drama in which an elderly Jewish doctor (Catherine Samie) writes a letter to her son about life in her Ukrainian village under Nazi occupation. In French. Opening Jan. 29. (Film Forum.)

LOST IN LA MANCHA
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening Jan. 31.

THE RECRUIT
Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening Jan. 31.

FILM NOTES

ABOUT SCHMIDT
Alexander Payne's last movie, "Election," was unpleasant, timely, and as sharp as a nib. His new movie is unpleasant, indecisive, and about as cheering as a damp fog. Jack Nicholson plays the eponymous Schmidt, who leaves a long career in insurance and slumps into graceless retirement. His wife (June Squibb) dies, whereupon his daughter (Hope Davis) takes over the household; soon enough, the aging male is left alone, and we are left to ponder the mismatch—unresolved by Payne—between Schmidt the early fusspot and Schmidt the emerging slob, with a riot of used food packaging at his feet. After that, the movie takes to the road, like a late, soft aftermath to "Five Easy Pieces." The Nicholson of that film made hard choices, but here he plays to the viewers' cultish worship of Jack the Lad, and even the saddest scenes have flourishes of rumpled clowning. A picture that aimed to celebrate a regular guy winds up endorsing his comic disdain for the stale lives around him. With Dermot Mulroney, Kathy Bates, and a hot tub that has seen it all.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 12/16/02.) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 1, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

ANTWONE FISHER
"Oprah" for men. Fisher's horrific childhood—he was abandoned by his mother and then sexually molested in his Cleveland foster home—gets the full Hollywood treatment in Denzel Washington's directorial début. The self-congratulatory autobiographical script, written by Fisher, concentrates on his relationship with a psychologist (played by Washington) who provides him with the key to conquering his past. Derek Luke, as the title character, and Joy Bryant, as his love interest, give performances that raise the film above its inspirational message, but just barely. Washington directs in his own image—the movie is sturdy and handsomely made, but lacks grit and complexity.—*Bruce Diones* (Beekman, Chelsea West, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 62nd & Broadway, and Union Square.)

BLACKMAIL
A London-set 1929 Hitchcock silent thriller that was in part reshot and in part dubbed to make it a sound film—and an unusually imaginative and innovative one. With its trick shots in the British Museum and a chase on the museum roof, the film seems almost German in its pictorial style, and the heroine is indeed played by the German actress Anny Ondra, who married Max Schmeling. (Her voice is dubbed.) Cyril Ritchard, who didn't look very different half a century later, plays the artist who tries to rape the heroine. Hitchcock turns up being pestered by a little boy while he tries to read a book.—*Pauline Kael* (Moving Image; Feb. 1.)

BLIND SPOT: HITLER'S SECRETARY
Traudl Junge started working for Hitler in 1942 when she was twenty-two years old. She took dictation and typed his private communiqués, and was one of the few people to survive the final days in the Berlin bunker. After the war, she kept herself and her story out of sight until two Austrian filmmakers, André Heller and Othmar Schmiderer, interviewed her two years ago, shortly before her death. The film is just Frau Junge and the camera, unadorned with newsreel footage, still photography, or even a fade. The starkness is deliberate: there's nothing to cushion us from taking the measure of this dignified, carefully spoken old woman who worked next to Hitler, admiring him as a father figure while remaining unaware of the concentration camps. In German.—*Michael Agger* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

LE CERCLE ROUGE
In this de-luxe piece of heist-film engineering from 1970, the writer-director Jean-Pierre Melville provides a satisfying payoff for the audience, if not the characters—according to the hardboiled karma of the plot, everyone winds up philosophical or dead. Just released ex-con Alain Delon and escaped prisoner Gian-Maria Volonté take turns saving each other's life and then enlist marksman Yves Montand to help them pull off a Paris jewelry-store robbery. Bourvil is the inspector on their trail, and François Périer the well-connected owner of an irresistible gangland night club. Volonté's juicy wildness as a self-proclaimed "amateur" and Montand's blowsy authority as an alcoholic help lubricate the plot. And with the help of the cinematographer Henri Decaë, Melville puts on a virtuoso display of movie-action geometry, from the red circle of chalk Delon uses on a pool cue to the slashing lines he cuts in his blocky American car. In French.—*Michael Sragow* (Film Forum.)

CHICAGO
The time is the nineteen-twenties, but the setting is so stylized, so shamelessly grounded in a hundred other shows and films, that "Chicago" barely qualifies as a period piece; indeed, it merrily jabs at the celebrity-lust of our own era. Catherine Zeta-Jones is Velma Kelly, and Renée Zellweger is Roxie Hart. Each is a man-killer, and each resides in jail, plotting her defense with the silken legal help of Billy Flynn (Richard Gere). The music and lyrics by Kander and Ebb operate on the old-fashioned principle that every song should be a showstopper, regardless of whether the show should be stopped. The director, Rob Marshall, cuts away furiously during every song, and this chronic wish to glance aside makes us wonder: could the performers not weather the camera's unstinting gaze? The only player to conquer the movie is Zeta-Jones, who gets by on a full tank of unleaded oomph. The film has punch, but it never really conveys the delicious, redeeming sense that life can be lived on the hoof.—*A.L.* (1/6/03) (84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

CITY OF GOD
Just how far into your face can a movie get? This one has every intention of leaving you scalded and bruised. Set in Rio de Janeiro, it was directed by Fernando Meirelles, who tries every trick known to cameramen: freeze frames, whip pans, multiple dissolves, slow motion, double motion, any kind of motion. The object is to keep pace with his characters, the young and dispossessed of the Brazilian slums. The movie hastens roughly from the nineteen-sixties to the eighties, as we watch the boys either die or grow old before their time. The result is a jolting ride, but such is the skill on show that we run the risk of being too exhilarated to notice every death; does the film convince in its plea for the forgotten poor, or are we encouraged to forget them as they fall? In Portuguese.—*A.L.* (1/20/03) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND
Just as audiences are recovering from "Adaptation," here comes another Charlie Kaufman script. George Clooney directed, but this project is pure Kaufman: fact and fiction tossed in the blender together, with plenty of formal trickery. The story, or more precisely, the leaping-off point, is the autobiography of Chuck Barris, the producer who invented "The Dating Game," "The Newlywed Game," and "The Gong Show," which he also hosted. Then, there is this small matter of political assassinations: Barris claimed to be a C.I.A. hit man, tapped for various "wet" operations throughout his television career. Sam Rockwell plays Barris as a carnal, slightly crazed man who's also deeply insecure that he'll be remembered as a purveyor of trash. Is this what tipped him into his fantasy life? This nimble and free-spirited film doesn't say; it continually shifts perspective and plays with the mystery. In the end, it's a story of wayward ambition and an object lesson in what people will do when placed in front of a television camera. With Drew Barrymore and Julia Roberts as the duelling women in Barris's life.—*M.A.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

DIVINE INTERVENTION
A strange, disconnected sampler of gags, semi-stories, and outright fantasy. Still, as the director Elia Suleiman might point out, we live in peculiar times, and cinema should rise to the occasion. Suleiman is Palestinian—nobody else would conceive of a sequence in which a balloon bearing the face of Yasir Arafat drifts over an Israeli checkpoint—and his work takes both root and flight in the Occupied Territories. Insofar as there is a plot, it centers on a gloomy fellow, played by Suleiman himself, who has a harassed father (Nayef Fahoum Daher) and a disarmingly beautiful beloved (Manal Khader). Most of their interaction is performed in near-silence, with occasional rushes of music. Somehow, out of the unpromising material of small, disturbed lives, Suleiman has made a bone-dry comedy dedicated to the precarious border between the hapless and the hopeless. Imagine Monsieur Hulot unleashed upon Jerusalem and you will not be far off. If only Suleiman could have resisted the charms of silliness in his climactic sequence—one of those kung-fu disco mystical terrorist shoot-outs. Aren't they always a drag? In Arabic and Hebrew.—*A.L.* (1/20/03) (Angelika Film Center and Kew Gardens Cinema.)

DR. STRANGELOVE
Stanley Kubrick's anti-nuke farce is finally being projected in the narrower screen format the writer-director intended—close to the shapes of old movies, TV tubes, and standard comic-book panels. It's the perfect frame for Kubrick's devastating deadpan burlesque of sappy Hollywood war sagas, gassy newsreel coverage, and, above all, theories about acceptable nuclear atrocities that belong in futuristic nightmare comics. Kubrick and his writers (Terry Southern and Peter George) establish a cutthroat satiric tone, and the cast carries it through, from Slim Pickens and Sterling Hayden to Peter Sellers in three roles (the mad Teuton Strangelove, a Stevenson-like President, a low-key British captain) and George C. Scott, who's at his juiciest and funniest as General Buck Turgidson.—*M.S.* (Film Forum; Jan. 31-Feb. 3.)

GANGS OF NEW YORK
Daniel Day-Lewis, returning to movies after a spell of shoemaking in Florence, disports himself with royal assurance as the voluble thug William Cutting (Bill the Butcher) in Martin Scorsese's generally un-

successful epic about nineteenth-century gang life in New York. Wielding knife and cleaver, Day-Lewis does what he can to give this semi-coherent production some theatrical panache, but Scorsese and his screenwriters never succeed in linking together the intimate personal dramas and the endless gang war between the nativist Yankees (i.e., Protestants) and the new waves of Irish immigrants. The movie isn't boring, but it's heavy-spirited, obvious, and grisly, with an emphasis on knives and blood that borders on the fetishistic. With a sullen, stolid Leonardo DiCaprio as a young Irish immigrant eager to avenge the death of his father, Cameron Diaz as a prostitute and pickpocket, Liam Neeson as a fallen Irish leader, and Jim Broadbent as the corrupt political boss William Tweed.—*David Denby* (12/23 & 30/02) (Battery Park 16, Cinema 2, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

A GUY THING

Jason Lee as a slacker fiancé, Selma Blair, in all her uptight glory, as the bride-to-be, and Julia Stiles as a free-spirited *x* factor who comes between them—such is the stuff that date-comedy dreams are made of. Sadly, despite a few good scenes, this picture is the kind of generic starter movie that the actors could and should have made four years ago.—*M.A.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

THE HOURS

It has to overcome an over-all morbidity, a fractured time sequence, and Philip Glass's intrusive, chiming score, and, amazingly, it does. Stephen Daldry directed this adaptation of Michael Cunningham's prize-winning 1998 novel, from a script by David Hare. They've fashioned a lovely, serious work—as good as any recent "literary" movie—devoted to two themes, the variety of human bonds, especially the bond of love, and the gift that the dying make to the living. Nicole Kidman gives a revelatory performance as Virginia Woolf, both in 1923, at the time of writing "Mrs. Dalloway," and in 1941, when she loaded her coat with stones and walked into a river. Julianne Moore is a depressed Los Angeles housewife in 1951, and Meryl Streep plays a contemporary New York literary editor who hopes to give a party for a poet friend (Ed Harris) dying of AIDS. The widely separated episodes fit together as surely and lightly as dancers in a Balanchine ballet.—*D.D.* (12/23 & 30/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 72nd Street East, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

MAD MAX 2: THE ROAD WARRIOR

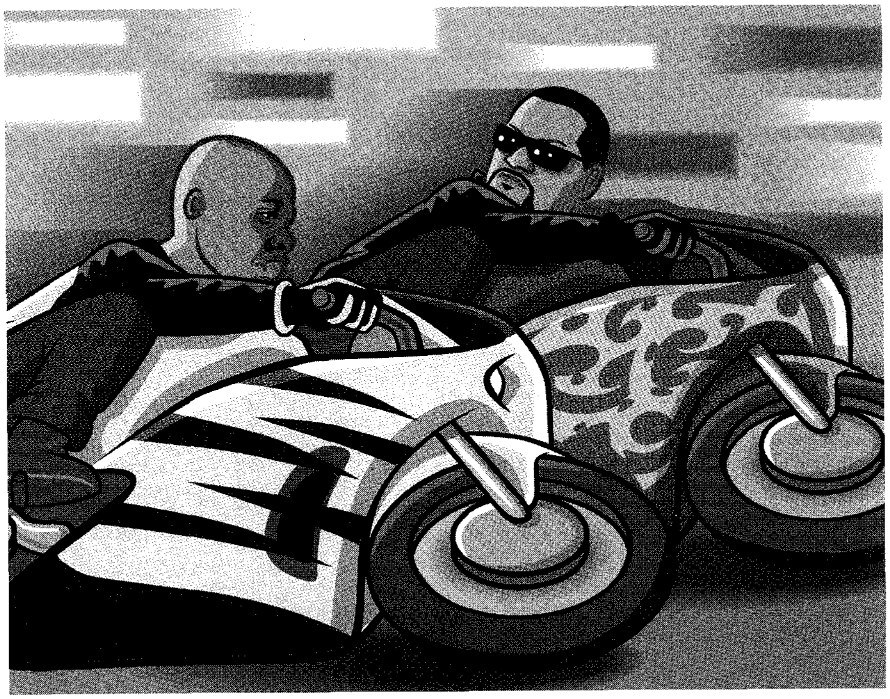
Set in a postapocalyptic wasteland, this 1982 sequel to "Mad Max" is a mutant sprung from virtually all action genres. The film is one continuous spurt of energy, and the jangly, fast editing suggests wit; so does the broad blacktop highway that cuts across the desert nothingness. The rampaging vandals—punkish post-nuclear-war bikers—menace the decent folk in more barbarous and gaudier ways than the wild motorcyclists in Roger Corman pictures did. But the movie is abstract in an adolescent way: the director George Miller attempts to tap into the universal concept of the hero (as enunciated by Jung and explicated by Joseph Campbell in "The Hero with a Thousand Faces"). He consciously uses his hero, Max (Mel Gibson), as an icon; that's enough to squeeze the juice out of any actor. For all its huffing and puffing, this is a sappy sentimental movie.—*P.K.* (Sunshine Cinema; Jan. 31-Feb. 1.)

NARC

Of all the hard-assed, violent, grainy-looking urban thrillers to have emerged since "The French Connection," this movie is perhaps the hardest and the most turbulent—and also one of the most soulful and touching. The hero, Nick Tellis (Jason Patric), has been thrown off the force but is brought back to investigate the mysterious death of an undercover cop. Tellis teams up with the murdered cop's partner, Henry Oak (Ray Liotta), and they pursue the loose ends of the case through the freezing streets of Detroit and into unspeakably sordid hideaways. The movie is half downbeat police procedural, half "Rashomon," half existential drama. That makes three halves, but this is an ambitious picture. The young director, Joe Carnahan, wants to impress upon us the intractability of our life on this earth. In all, the movie is a blood-soaked, hellish experience—a midnight special for lovers of a violent genre—but it has been made with a mixture of ferocity and gentleness that leaves one exhausted and at peace.—*D.D.* (1/27/03) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

NATIONAL SECURITY

Steve Zahn plays the straight man to Martin Lawrence's motormouth in this action comedy directed by Dennis Dugan. More action than comedy, the film begins with promise as a satire on racial profiling—Zahn plays an overzealous cop who assumes that Lawrence is stealing a car (he's just locked his keys inside). Later, employed as a security guard, Zahn teams up with Lawrence to solve a murder. Their capers are mildly amusing, and Zahn gives his role a lot of frustrated energy, but Lawrence (who picked up twenty million dollars for this film) never develops a real rapport with his partner—he's too busy overacting like a star.—*B.D.* (Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)



Derek Luke and Laurence Fishburne in "Biker Boyz," opening January 31.

MICHAEL WELDON

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY

The slimming of Charles Dickens's 1839 epic by the director Douglas McGrath focusses on an educated boy (Charlie Hunnam) who loses his father and then attempts to save the rest of his family from his abusive, wealthy uncle (Christopher Plummer). The film is picturesque and lively, and it rejects much of the extreme emotional and social distress of the novel. McGrath simplifies squalor and hardship in the name of entertainment. This Dickens-lite approach is saved from banality by some fine character acting (especially from Jim Broadbent and Tom Courtenay) and a brisk filmmaking style that makes the movie an easy read.—*B.D.* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Village East Cinemas.)

THE PIANIST

Roman Polanski's drama about the survival of a real-life Polish Jew, the pianist Wladyslav Szpilman (Adrien Brody), during the grim days of the Holocaust is a movie that has been perfectly produced. The sense of scale and detail is exact, and the violence is neither exaggerated nor minimized but presented with clear-eyed accuracy. Yet this is not a work of great originality or imagination. Its protagonist lacks depth, and the theme of survival through hiding is, by its very nature, redundant. The playwright Ronald Harwood adapted the 1946 book that Szpilman wrote about his experiences without attempting to open up the hero at all. Is he ashamed, defiant, guilty? Grateful for his luck? We haven't a clue. His survival is an anomaly, a mistake, a joke—and that may be why the story appealed to Polanski. Shot largely in Warsaw.—*D.D.* (1/13/03) (East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Square, and 19th Street East 6.)

THE RECRUIT

Colin Farrell, the young Irish actor, has dark, hurting eyes, stubble on his upper lip and chin, and a slender, lithe body. He can't miss as a star, and he gives promise of knowing what he's up to as an actor. He's also the only interesting thing in "The Recruit," yet another paranoid thriller. This one is about training for the C.I.A., and it also stars Al Pacino in his domineering-satanic mode, complete with an opera-house Mephistopheles beard and glittering eyes. The Australian-born filmmaker Roger Donaldson has always been a competent director, but he doesn't have the wit to rise above a bad script, which, in this movie, leaves the unfortunate impression that the recruits are training less for intelligence work than for future appearances in action movies.—*D.D.* (1/27/03) (Battery Park 16, Cinema 1, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village East Cinemas.)

RUSSIAN ARK

A guide to the treasures of the Hermitage, a rueful glance down the vistas of Russian history, or a show of technical prowess: take your pick. Alexander Sokurov, the creator of "Mother and Son," proves that his singular method—at once earthy and transcendent—is gaining strength and width. The new film unwinds in one take, lasting ninety-six minutes, and by some miracle we grow happily accustomed to its rhythm, like children held rapt by a bedtime story. The camera glides through galleries as if it were the eye of an invisible visitor; ahead is a black-coated stranger, who accosts passers-by and clucks tenderly, if critically, over the art. Sokurov has made not a documentary, however careful his inspection of painted surfaces, but a collection of small, sorrowful dramas—wait for the imperial children, or the blind woman caressing a marble sculpture. The effect is impenetrable, yet the film is blessed with clarity; maybe, if you spend that much time among Old Masters, they start to rub off on you. In Russian.—*A.L.* (12/16/02) (Cinema Village and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

THE SMALLEST SHOW ON EARTH
This chipper, underrated eighty-one-minute British comedy from 1957 showcases one of Peter Sellers' most flavorful performances. Bill Travers plays the lead: a would-be writer who inherits a dilapidated small-city cinema, or "fleapit," which he and his wife (Virginia McKenna) attempt to fix up and sell. The two strike pay dirt when they book arid Westerns, raise the indoor temperature to a swelter, and send a curvaceous refreshment gal down the aisles. The director Basil Dearden and the writers William Rose and John Eldridge show a keen understanding of how low-level movie-going operates: sensationalism mixed with rowdy audience participation. (Real-life theatre operators love this film.) Sellers, as Percy Quill, the alcoholic projectionist, turns a battle with the bottle into heroic (and then antiheroic) farce. Margaret Rutherford as Mrs. Fazackalee, the eccentrically officious cashier, gradually unveils the heart of a Victorian romantic. And Bernard Miles as the taciturn doorman and janitor, Old Tom, proves how dangerous, and useful, a little knowledge can be.—*M.S.* (Film Forum; Feb. 3.)

TALK TO HER
In Pedro Almodóvar's odd but touching romantic drama, two very different men are drawn together by a common task: taking care of women who have fallen into a coma. Benigno (Javier Cámara), a shy, seemingly asexual young male nurse, looks after Alicia (Leonor Watling), a beautiful ballet dancer. Marco (Darío Grandinetti), a fortyish Argentine writer, becomes the lover of a fierce, long-waisted female bullfighter (Rosario Flores). After she is gored in the ring, she never speaks again. Both love affairs are touched by fantasy. Almodóvar's point appears to be that you can't have love without fable—that every love affair is an improbable narrative wrung from non-being and loneliness. The movie is shot in a new, subdued style for the director: past and present flow together, and everything seems touched with a melancholy magic. Two ballets by the choreographer Pina Bausch are integral to the film's themes. In Spanish.—*D.D.* (11/25/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

25TH HOUR
A thirtyish drug dealer (Edward Norton) who is too smart for his situation gets pinched and sentenced to seven years in prison. His imminent departure produces a crisis in the lives of his best friends, a cynical Wall Street trader (Barry Pepper) and a schlubby private-school teacher (Philip Seymour Hoffman). The movie might be described as a turbulent elegy for the burnt-out hopes of a generation. There's a thriller plot buried in the material, but it's done half-heartedly. The glory of the movie is its talk—the profane New York verve of the three men, suffused with a post-September 11th bitterness. David Benioff adapted his own novel, and Spike Lee directed. Brian Cox plays the hero's father, and Rosario Dawson his girlfriend.—*D.D.* (1/13/03) (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

ALSO PLAYING

ADAPTATION (12/9/02)
BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Kew Gardens Cinema, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 64th and 2nd, and Sunshine Cinema.

AMEN
Kew Gardens Cinema, Paris, and Quad Cinema.

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN (12/23 & 30/02)
Battery Park 16, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.

FAR FROM HEAVEN (11/18/02)
Angelika Film Center, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS (1/6/03)
Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

MORVERN CALLAR
Cinema Village.

THE QUIET AMERICAN (11/25/02)
Lincoln Square and Village Theatre VII.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363).
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (212-398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kew Gardens Cinema, 81-05 Lefferts Blvd., Queens (718-441-9835).

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Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (212-757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—World-cinema showcase. Jan. 31 at 8: "Parliament Funkadelic: One Nation Under a Groove," a work in progress by Yvonne Smith. ♦ Through Feb. 16: "You Ain't Heard Nothin'," a series of films that were made in both silent and sound versions. Feb. 1 at 2: "Blackmail" (1929, Alfred Hitchcock; silent). ♦ Feb. 1 at 4: "Blackmail" (†). ♦ Feb. 2 at 2: "Coquette" (1929, Sam Taylor; silent). ♦ Feb. 2 at 4: "Coquette" (1929, Taylor; sound version). ♦ Repertory nights. Feb. 1-2 at 6:30: "A Fistful of Dollars" (1964, Sergio Leone).

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—Jan. 29-30 at 1:30, 4:15, 7, and 9:30: "Rosemary's Baby" (1968, Roman Polanski). ♦ Through Feb. 13: A Peter Sellers retrospective. Jan. 31-Feb. 2 at 2:05, 5:50, and 9:35 and Feb. 3 at 1:10 and 4:55: "Dr. Strangelove" (†). ♦ Jan. 31-Feb. 2 at 3:55 and 7:40 and Feb. 3 at 3: "A Shot in the Dark" (1964, Blake Edwards). ♦ Feb. 3 at 7: "The Ladykillers" (1955, Alexander Mackendrick). ♦ Feb. 3 at 8:55: "The Smallest Show on Earth" (†). ♦ Feb. 4 at 2:30 and 7: "What's New, Pussycat?" (1965, Clive Donner). ♦ Feb. 4 at 4:25 and 9:10: "Casino Royale" (1967, John Huston et al.).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—The cinematography of Raoul Coutard. Feb. 4 at 12:30, 3:30, and 9: "Les Carabiniers" (1963, Jean-Luc Godard; in French). ♦ Feb. 4 at 6:30: "First Name Carmen" (1984, Godard; in French).

GRAMERCY THEATRE
127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900)—Through Jan. 31: "*Positif* Champions: Fifty Years of Cinema." Jan. 31 at 2: "Je T'Aime, Je T'Aime" (1968, Alain Resnais; in French). ♦ Jan. 31 at 4: "Secrets and Lies" (1996, Mike Leigh). ♦ Jan. 31 at 6:45: "The Red and the White" (1967, Miklós Jancsó; in Hungarian and Russian). ♦ Early examples of feature films and dramatic shorts, in honor of the ninetieth anniversary of the 1913 Armory Show. Feb. 1 at 2: "Ingeborg Holm" (1913, Victor Sjöström). ♦ Feb. 1 at 4: "A Modern Romance" (1913, William Robert Daly) and "Ivanhoe" (1913, Herbert Brenon). ♦ Feb. 2 at 2: "All on Account of a Transfer" (1913, C. Jay Williams) and other shorts. ♦ Feb. 2 at 4: "Broken Ways" (1913, D. W. Griffith) and other shorts. ♦ Recent acquisitions. Feb. 2 at 6: "Thrane's Method" (1998, Unni Straume; in Norwegian). ♦ Feb. 3 at 6: "Xiao Wu" (1997, Jia Zhangke; in Mandarin). ♦ Feb. 3 at 8:15: "Hybrid" (2000, Monteith McCollum).

PIONEER THEATRE
155 E. 3rd St. (212-254-3300)—French gangster films. Jan. 29-30 at 9:15: "Rififi" (1955, Jules Dassin; in French). ♦ Jan. 31 at 9:30; Feb. 1 at 6:30, 8:20, and 10:10; Feb. 2 at 7:40 and 9:30; and Feb. 3-4 at 6:10 and 10:15: "Pépé le Moko" (1937, Julien Duvivier; in French).

SUNSHINE CINEMA
139-143 E. Houston St. (212-358-0573)—Midnight movies. Jan. 31-Feb. 1: "Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior" (†).

THALIA THEATRE
Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—"New Voices Since the Eighties." Feb. 1 at 1 and 6:30: "Flowers of Shanghai" (1998, Hou Hsiao-Hsien; in Taiwanese). ♦ Feb. 1 at 3:30 and 9: "The Puppetmaster" (1993, Hou; in Taiwanese). ♦ Feb. 2 at 2 and 6:30: "Bad Lieutenant" (1992, Abel Ferrara). ♦ Feb. 2 at 3:45 and 8:30: "King of New York" (1990, Ferrara).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through Jan. 30: "Soviet Sounds: Soviet Composers in the Cinema." All films are in Russian. Jan. 29 at 2: "Ivan the Terrible, Part I" (1945, Sergei Eisenstein; music by Sergei Prokofiev). ♦ Jan. 29 at 4: "Ivan the Terrible, Part II" (1958, Eisenstein; music by Prokofiev). ♦ Jan. 29 at 8:15 and Jan. 30 at 4: "Hamlet" (1964, Grigory Kozintsev; music by Dmitri Shostakovitch). ♦ Jan. 30 at 2 and 7: "Bear's Kiss" (2002, Sergei Bodrov; music by Giya Kancheli). ♦ Starting Jan. 31: "*Film Comment* Selects," recent movies yet to be released in the U.S. Jan. 31 at 1 and 3:45, Feb. 1 at 1 and 8:30, and Feb. 2 at 3:30: "11'09"01" (2002), an omnibus film with Samira Makmalbaf and ten other filmmakers presenting 9/11-themed shorts. ♦ Jan. 31 at 6:30 and Feb. 1 at 3:45: "Happy Here and Now" (2002, Michael Almereyda). ♦ Jan. 31 at 9, Feb. 1 at 5:45, and Feb. 2 at 1: "Demonlover" (2002, Olivier Assayas; in English, French, and Japanese). ♦ Feb. 2 at 6:15 and Feb. 4 at 1: "The Road" (2001, Darezhan Omirbaev; in Kazakh). ♦ Feb. 2 at 8:15, Feb. 3 at 6:30, and Feb. 4 at 3: "Love Torn in Dream" (2000, Raoul Ruiz; in French, Portuguese, and Spanish). ♦ Feb. 3 at 9: "Seafood" (2001, Wen Zhu; in Mandarin).

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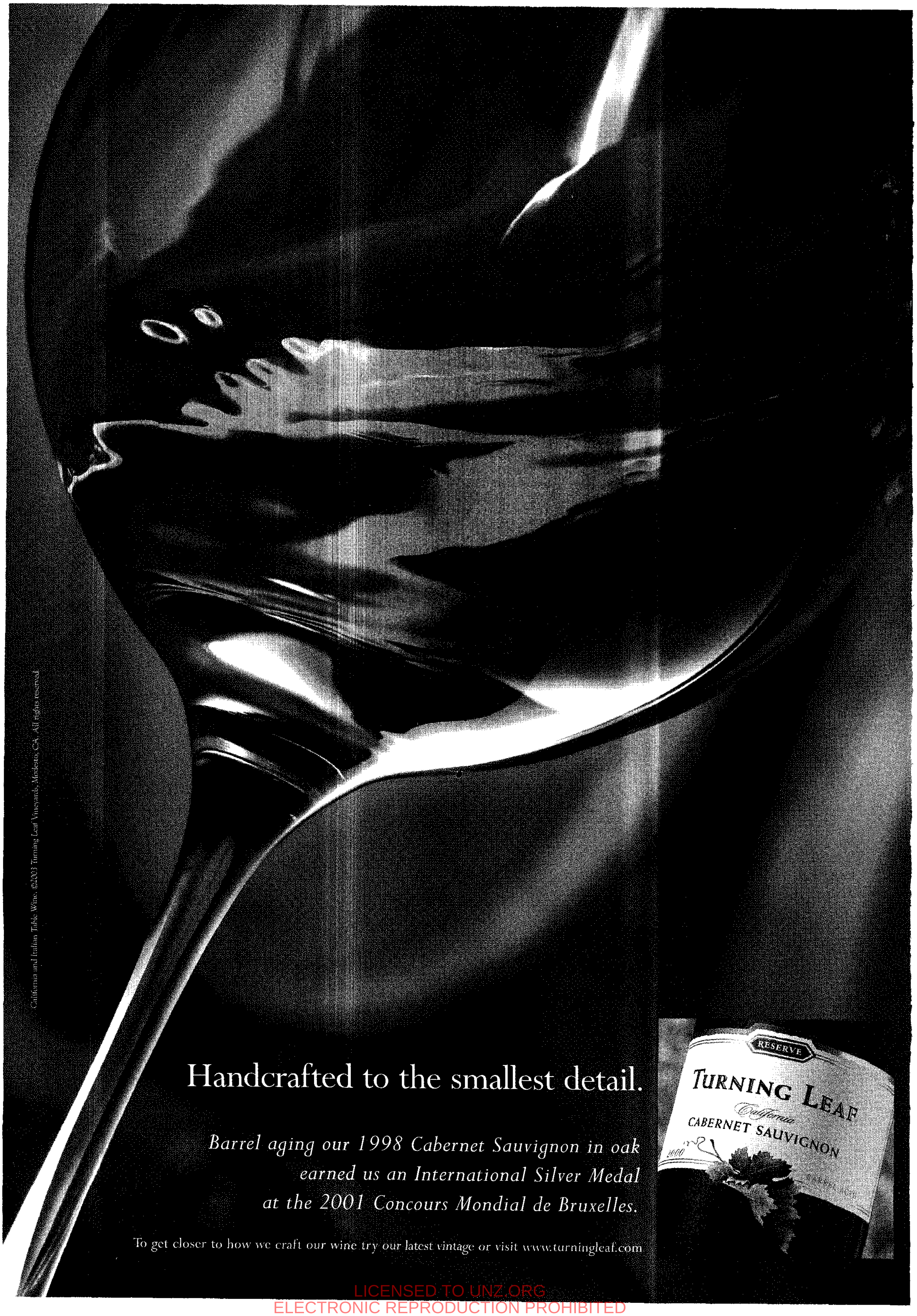
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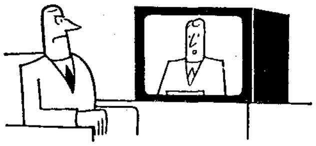
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
MAKING A CASE

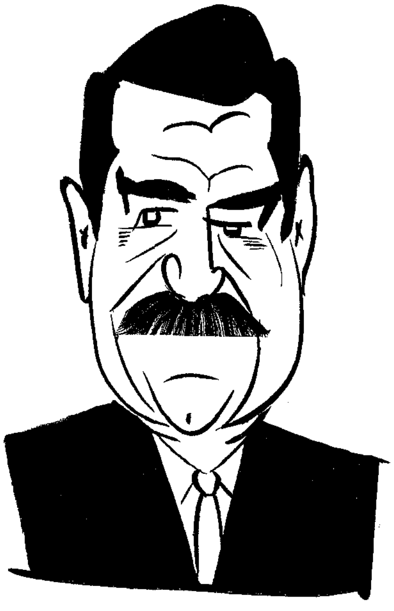


In recent days, as the White House speechwriters were weighing the language and the imagery of Tuesday's State of the Union address, President Bush was extemporizing his way toward war. He declared himself (vaguely) "sick and tired of games," exasperated by the arms-inspection process in Iraq and Saddam Hussein's attempts to evade it. And (even more vaguely) he warned any Iraqi commander who launched a weapon of mass destruction, "When Iraq is liberated, you will be treated, tried, and persecuted as a war criminal."

Ever since the last Presidential campaign, Bush's wary relationship to his native tongue has been the stuff of easy comedy; his love of being "misunderestimated" a gift not merely to the writers of "Saturday Night Live" but also to Karl Rove's political operation, which had been eager to contrast Candidate Bush's studied homeliness with Candidate Gore, who liked to tell reporters of his fondness for the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. What pork rinds were to the father, malapropisms are to the son—a gesture of cross-cultural solidarity.

On the level of state, however, the President's language, his ability to set out complex matters of policy for the American people, and also for our allies, and even our enemies, matters enormously. At the United Nations General Assembly more than four months ago, Bush, after long delay, opened his case against Saddam Hussein with a pointed litany of Iraq's egregious violations of human rights and international law. With a gravity appropriate to the occasion, Bush surveyed everything from Saddam's genocide in the Kurdish north to his relentless ambition to build nuclear weapons and dominate the region, by employing the same level of terror that keeps his own citizens in a state of constant subjugation.

But since this impressive opening foray the President has been less consistent in furthering, and deepening, his case for the use of force in Iraq. Even as he has dispatched aircraft carriers, fighter planes, and tens of thousands of troops to the region, he routinely dismisses important objections to, and questions about, the buildup to war; mainly, he has indulged in a rhetoric of irritation.



What is most unfortunate about the President's lack of public engagement in the argument for force is that the objections to it are answerable. There are, of course, some who oppose an invasion of Iraq on the ground that, say, peace is better than war, or that the "real issue" is a conspiracy of oil interests, or that the President is an avenging cowboy and all his advisers a posse. Far more seriously, there are questions of why now and why Iraq (and not North Korea or Iran); there are profound concerns about the loss of life (can't we just foment an Army coup?), and about what happens the day after Saddam is arrested, or killed, or lands on Elba. Do we really expect a Jeffersonian legislature to rise from the rubble of Saddam's palaces? Are we prepared for years of rebuilding in Iraq when we already seem to have lost interest in the continuing chaos in Afghanistan?

Saddam's record is unambiguously horrific, but the issue of a military offensive is almost uniquely complex as a matter of timing and strategy. There have been no recent Iraqi invasions of neighboring countries, no recent Biblical mass of refugees, no indisputable evidence of a connection with the Al Qaeda attacks on New York and Washington. It is also unlikely that the White House or the United Nations inspection team will present this week what Adlai Stevenson presented to the Security Council during the Cuban missile crisis: irrefutable evidence that an enemy is amassing weapons of mass de-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

"I married money, son, so that you might never have to."

• •

struction. Even if the Administration agrees to support a short extension for the U.N. inspectors who are now at work in Iraq—and such a concession might go a long way toward building a larger, more cohesive coalition—this evidence will not come easily, if at all. The Cubans and their Soviet allies might not have been able to hide an enormous military installation from American spy planes forty years ago on a relatively small island, but the Iraqis are highly experienced in the craft of "cheat and retreat," and it is not as difficult to hide centrifuges or gallons of anthrax in a country that is larger than Germany.

As it happens, the most comprehensive and convincing case for the use of force in Iraq has been made by a government intellectual, Kenneth M. Pollack. From 1995 to 1996 and from 1999 to 2001, Pollack served in the Clinton Administration as director for Gulf affairs at the National Security Council; before that, he was a military analyst of the Persian Gulf region for the C.I.A. More effectively than Dick Cheney or Paul Wolfowitz or any other of the hawkish big thinkers in the Administration, Pollack, in his book "The Threatening Storm," presents in almost rueful terms the myriad reasons that an aggressive policy toward Iraq now is the least bad of our alternatives. As Bush did at the U.N., Pollack carefully describes the Stalinist character of Saddam's state: the pervasive use of torture to terrorize and subdue the citizenry and insure the loyalty of the Army and the security apparatus; the acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing; the use of chemical weapons on neighbors and his own citizens; the sponsorship of terrorist groups; the refusal to relinquish weapons of mass destruction despite the humanitarian and economic cost the Iraqis pay through international embargo. We are reminded, too, of Saddam's vision of himself as the modern Saladin, the modern Nebuchadnezzar II, who (after massacring the Kurds, invading Kuwait, and attacking the marsh Arabs of the south) vows to "liberate" Jerusalem, vanquish the United States, and rule over a united Arab world. Saddam is not a man of empty promises. His territorial aggression is a matter of record, his nuclear ambitions are clear.

Unlike the President, Pollack dignifies all possible objections and what-ifs with answers. For example, he concedes that North Korea and Iran are, in some ways, even greater and more obvious threats than Iraq, but he carefully shows why the regional politics of northern Asia require a different tack and why Iran, with its more dynamic, grass-roots politics, is far likelier to undergo a homegrown revolution or reform than Iraq, where politics of any kind are not permitted.

The United States has been wrong, politically and morally, about Iraq more than once in the past; Washington has supported Saddam against Iran and overlooked some of his bloodiest adventures. The price of being wrong yet again could be incalculable. History will not easily excuse us if, by deciding not to decide, we defer a reckoning with an aggressive totalitarian leader who intends not only to develop weapons of mass destruction but also to use them.

Saddam's abdication, or a military coup, would be a godsend; his sudden conversion to the wisdom of disarmament almost as good. It is a fine thing to dream. But, assuming such dreams are not realized, a return to a hollow pursuit of containment will be the most dangerous option of all.

—*David Remnick*

DEPT. OF REHABILITATION
AN EX-CON LOGS ON

The last time Kevin Mitnick surfed the Web . . . oops. Until last week, Mitnick, who is usually described as the world's most notorious hacker, and who was considered such a profound threat to American society when he was arrested, in 1995, that he wasn't even granted a bail hearing, had never actually surfed on the Internet. "You have to have some speed to surf," he said the other day. "When I went away, there was no such thing. I had rigged a special modem to keep me ahead of the feds during the years I was a fugitive. Most of the time I was connecting at 300 baud"—the average cable modem these days works five thousand times as fast. "Even then you couldn't surf on that."

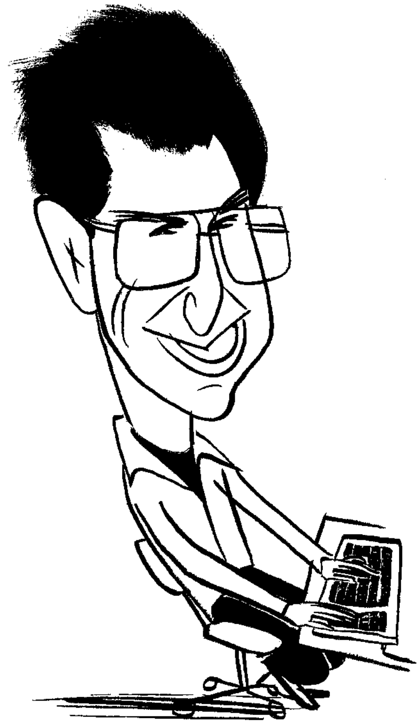
Mitnick, who broke into countless computers to steal trade secrets and proprietary software, was convicted of computer and wire fraud. The sentence was harsh, in part because he had vanished while on probation and taunted the F.B.I. for two years, but it was also intended as a deterrent to anyone who might try to emulate him. Last Tuesday, after five years in jail and three more on parole, during which he was prohibited from even connecting to the Internet, the self-described "Osama bin Mitnick of cyberspace" finally got back online. He celebrated his first day of computer freedom on an Internet television show called "TechTV." Because he had no idea how to navigate from one Web site to another (and wondered, by the way, what this thing called Internet Explorer was all about), he was assisted by two other hackers, Steve Wozniak, the co-founder of Apple Computers, and Emmanuel Goldstein, the publisher of the hacker quarterly *2600*. Both were outspoken supporters of the "Free Kevin" campaign, which became a sort of religion among computer geeks around the world.

"Don't be freaked out by advertising," Goldstein told Mitnick. "It's everywhere. So is pornography." Mitnick looked dazed by the concept of a pop-up ad.

"I had no idea even where to begin," Mitnick said later. "To finally have it all there, right in front of me, was a little bit daunting." So he did just what you might expect a cyberian version of Rip Van Winkle to do: he Googled himself. His maiden vanity search turned up more than forty-three thousand references to his name.

Mitnick's first stop was his girlfriend's Web log (labmistress.com). Her most recent entry consisted of a meditation on what she ought to buy him for a post-parole gift. (She settled on the new Blackberry 6710.) Among his other destinations were Amazon.com (to check the sales of his new book, "The Art of Deception"); the F.B.I. home page ("I just had to look"); a page owned by the actor Kevin Spacey (they are working on a film project together); and eBay (where there is often some Mitnick memorabilia for sale). Last week, one could actually buy his weapon—the Toshiba Satellite 4400SX laptop that was seized by the Secret Service during a raid on his apartment in Seattle in 1994. The laptop has been signed by both Mitnick and Wozniak, and the bidding started at eight thousand dollars. (Mitnick won't be needing it anymore. Wozniak presented him with a brand-new Apple Titanium Power Book, then said, "I'm pro-choice, so if you prefer a P.C. I'll buy you one.")

Mitnick now lives in Thousand Oaks, California, and, like many hackers who have gone straight, he has started a computer-security company, called Defensive Thinking. Like Frank Abagnale, the legendary grifter who is the subject of the film "Catch Me If You Can," Mitnick feels that his past wrongs qualify him perfectly to help businesses and government agencies protect themselves against people like him. "I know that it will be hard for people to trust me at first," he said. "But I am reformed. I broke the law, and I paid for it."



Kevin Mitnick

In prison, Mitnick tried to keep current with computer culture, but the feds wouldn't have it. "They were ridiculous about it," he said. "My lawyer was not allowed even to show me data on a laptop, because the prosecutors said that if he brought a laptop to prison I could hack into the Pentagon and launch a nuclear strike, or hack into the Federal Bureau of Prisons and have myself released."

Mitnick was bitter when he got out of prison, but his new freedoms seem to have mellowed him. "I plan to be online tonight," he said, excitedly. "I am going to get DSL and learn to use all the tools. I am going to check out online banking. I intend to use online everything."

—*Michael Specter*

ON THE GROUND
GREETINGS FROM BAGHDAD

Strictly speaking, it is illegal for citizens of the United States to travel to Iraq without permission from the State Department or the Treasury Department, and doing so is punishable by up to twelve years in prison or a million-dollar fine. That didn't stop Sean Penn from embarking on his well-publicized "fact-finding" mission last month. Nor, more recently, did it stop some thirty peace-minded Americans (and one Bianca Jagger) from accepting an invitation from the president of Baghdad University, Dr. Muhammed Al-Rawi, to be his guests at a "Seminar for Peace" in the Iraqi capital. The Americans, all of whom had signed a "No Iraq Attack" petition that circulated on university campuses in the fall, received an e-mail from Dr. Al-Rawi shortly before Christmas. "Warm greetings from Iraq," it said. "To push for peace further, you, the American peace-loving academics, should come and visit Baghdad. . . . This will be a visit of solidarity with the academics of our University and the Iraqi people for peace." In follow-up e-mails ("Greetings from Baghdad"), the Iraqis offered to pay the Americans' expenses, including airfare; all but two of the visiting Americans declined and paid their own way.

A few raised eyebrows and a lecture or two greeted the travellers on their return home the other day, but no charges have been brought, and so, with new peace missions being planned, perhaps some words of advice from the intrepid academics will be of use to aspiring peaceniks.

For starters, leave your cell phones at home; they're not allowed in Iraq, and will be confiscated at Saddam International (and returned on departure). Your best bet, if you want to make a call, is to find Ahmed, in the "communications room" at the Mansour Melia, a European-style five-star hotel overlooking the Tigris River. Vicki Lovegren, who teaches math at John Carroll University, in Ohio, reports that Ahmed uses a "very old-looking switchboard," which can connect you to loved ones back home—except on those evenings when, as Ahmed says, "the international line sick, my dear."

The Mansour Melia is the place to stay, though you should pack a few extra light bulbs, just in case. The elevators tend not to stop on the second floor, so request a room on the third floor or higher. And be sure to try the hotel's hummus, made with cumin and ground-up tuna—"Awesome," Lovegren says.

Menus in Baghdad don't vary much (cucumbers, hummus, shish kebabs), though the options are "better than in Morocco," Wade Savage, a philosophy professor at the University of Minnesota, says. Still, some restaurants are worth trying, such as the Saddam Tower, atop a former telecom building that was bombed in the Gulf War. The restaurant, some six hundred and seventy feet in the air, offers "breathtaking" views of the city, and it rotates slowly while you eat. (Only a couple of people got dizzy during dinner, according to Marianne Baldwin, a graduate student in international peace and conflict resolution at American University, in Washington.)

You won't find booze in any of the restaurants, because public consumption of alcohol is forbidden in Iraq. With a little resourcefulness, however, you'll find that "the Iraqis still make a mean arrack"—an anise-flavored liquor—"out of dates," according to Keith Watenpaugh, a professor of Islamic history at Le Moyne College, in Syracuse. Stay away from the beer: U.N. sanctions make chlorine scarce, and the water can be unreliable, though only one academic contracted a case of "Baghdad tummy."

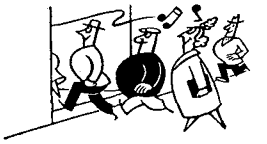
The public socializes in the coffeehouses. "You can smoke narghiles and drink coffee," Watenpaugh says, "and the Iraqis have this marvellous lemon tea." But bring a book. "Iraqi TV is some of the worst authoritarian TV I've ever seen," Watenpaugh reports, singling out "ham-fisted" coverage of the American visitors ("For the first three nights, they broadcast a half-hour show on us: 'Journal of the American Academic Delegation' ") and endlessly repeating footage of Saddam on his porch, firing a rifle into the air.

The Baath Party is usually on its best behavior for American visitors ("We were treated embarrassingly well by the regime," Watenpaugh says), and safety is not a grave concern. ("I even left my balcony door cracked at night so that I could feel the cool breeze and hear the morning call to prayer," Lovegren says.) But keep in mind that the Iraqis practice freedom in the Soviet style. Watenpaugh found that his bags at the hotel were "rifled through" on a daily basis: "I had a pair of binoculars taken one day, and a photocopy of an old 1958 map of Baghdad taken a different day."

Bianca Jagger, for her part, reports that she was able to feel the "warmth, hospitality, and openness of the Iraqi people, who expressed no hatred toward Americans." Travellers can be less sure of receiving the same hospitality from the American people upon their return. The academics haven't exactly been treated as harshly as Jane Fonda was after her 1972 trip to North Vietnam, but Marianne Baldwin received a letter from a friend's husband, who accused her of treading in "enemy territory." Another visitor to Baghdad U., Doug Paterson, a theatre professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, believes that, if that's the way people feel, "we need a lot more Hanoi Janes." Or Baghdad Biancas. Wade Savage seemed untroubled. "Remind me who Hanoi Jane is?" he said.

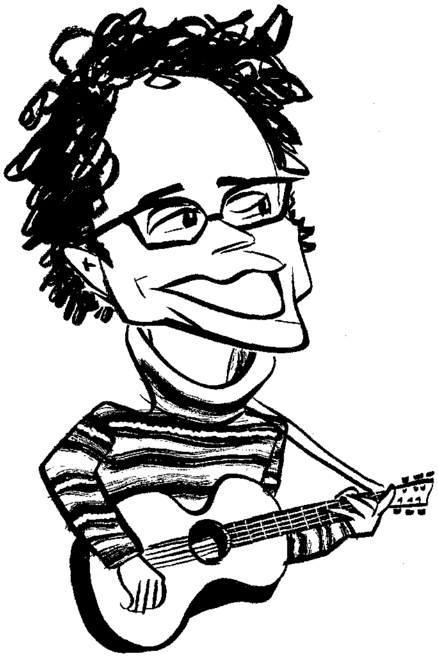
—*Ben McGrath*

ON THE CHARTS
THE NORAH THING



Jesse Harris is an unsigned thirty-three-year-old musician who was recently nominated for a Grammy award for writing "Don't Know Why," the hit single from Norah Jones's album "Come Away with Me." (The album, which Jesse wrote about a third of and also plays guitar on, was nominated for eight Grammys altogether.) Two weeks ago, when "Come Away with Me" moved into the top spot on the *Billboard* chart, Jesse became, in a sense, the No. 1 songwriter in the country.

He learned this the other night, several hours after getting home to Brooklyn from a weeklong trip to Brazil with some of the members of his current band, the Ferdinandos, which is named after an Italian restaurant in Carroll Gardens. That night, he played an open-mike night at a bar in Williamsburg, and, over the next seven days, he had three rehearsals with two different bands, two studio sessions, one sound check, two gigs, one memorable Italian meal, and a radio interview at a public station in the Bronx that frequently plays his music and wanted to talk to him about



Jesse Harris

"the whole Norah thing." So many artists want to co-write with him now that Sony—which publishes his music but doesn't distribute the four records he's made with the Ferdinandos or the two with an earlier band, Once Blue—is beginning to turn people away.

The pace of Jesse's old, pre-Norah-thing life was more like: wake up, eat breakfast, play guitar for a couple of hours, maybe do some temp work typing scripts for "As the World Turns." (His mother used to be a writer for the show and has played the character Dr. Susan Stewart since 1968.) Occasionally, he taught guitar to private-school boys on the Upper West Side. (Jesse graduated from Riverdale in 1987.) He'd spend about eight minutes a day answering e-mail and shipping Ferdinandos CDs that had been ordered from his Web site; now it takes him at least an hour—"and that's only because I try to be extremely brief."

Jesse met Norah Jones five years ago, when he went to hear his friend Kenny Wollesen (now the drummer in the Ferdinandos) play at the University of North Texas, in Denton, where Norah was a freshman. "Norah had this big blue Cadillac—a huge '71 Sedan DeVille—so she was sent by the faculty to pick up the band from their hotel," he explains. "That night, we played together on a fairway on the golf course at the hotel. Norah sang some standards—we all thought she was good. I left the following morning, but Kenny went to a cocktail-bar gig she had in Dallas." Jesse and Norah kept in touch and, a year later, he and Kenny and Tony Scherr (the Ferdinandos' lead guitar) went back to Texas to buy the Cadillac for Kenny, who has since sold it to Tony for $1.29.

Jesse was an English major at Cornell and likes to read Walt Whitman, Henry Miller, the Arabian Nights, and Dostoyevsky. His lyrics—about the break of day, the wish to fly away, feeling tired by the fire, some people all alone, other people not at home—are accessible and old-fashioned. "His songs are memorable but not stupidly catchy," Tony said. "The songs last. The first couple years I knew him, I always used to ask him who his songs were about. He'd say, 'Well, it's not really about anyone.' And I'd say, 'Come on, man, it's about *her,* isn't it?' He'd always get this shit-eating grin on his face and say, 'I just kinda wrote it.' Jesse has so much ability and is so prolific that that's almost a plausible explanation."

Last Tuesday night, before a late gig at the Living Room, on Stanton Street, Jesse had dinner at a nearby French restaurant. He is thin and precise, like a serious child, with a scribble of brown curls and a spirited facial expression that his uncle calls a "shark's smile." His manner, one of his singer-songwriter friends says, is "anachronistic." After dinner, he ordered a cheese course.

Jesse, who is very calm, has felt flustered only once in the past few months, when he found himself having breakfast with one of his heroes, the jazz guitarist Bill Frisell. He isn't worried about performing "Don't Know Why" with Norah Jones at Madison Square Garden on the night of the Grammy ceremony, at the end of February. "I wouldn't call what I feel onstage nervousness," he said. "I would say it's an extemporaneous detachment. I think." He smiled. "Ideally."

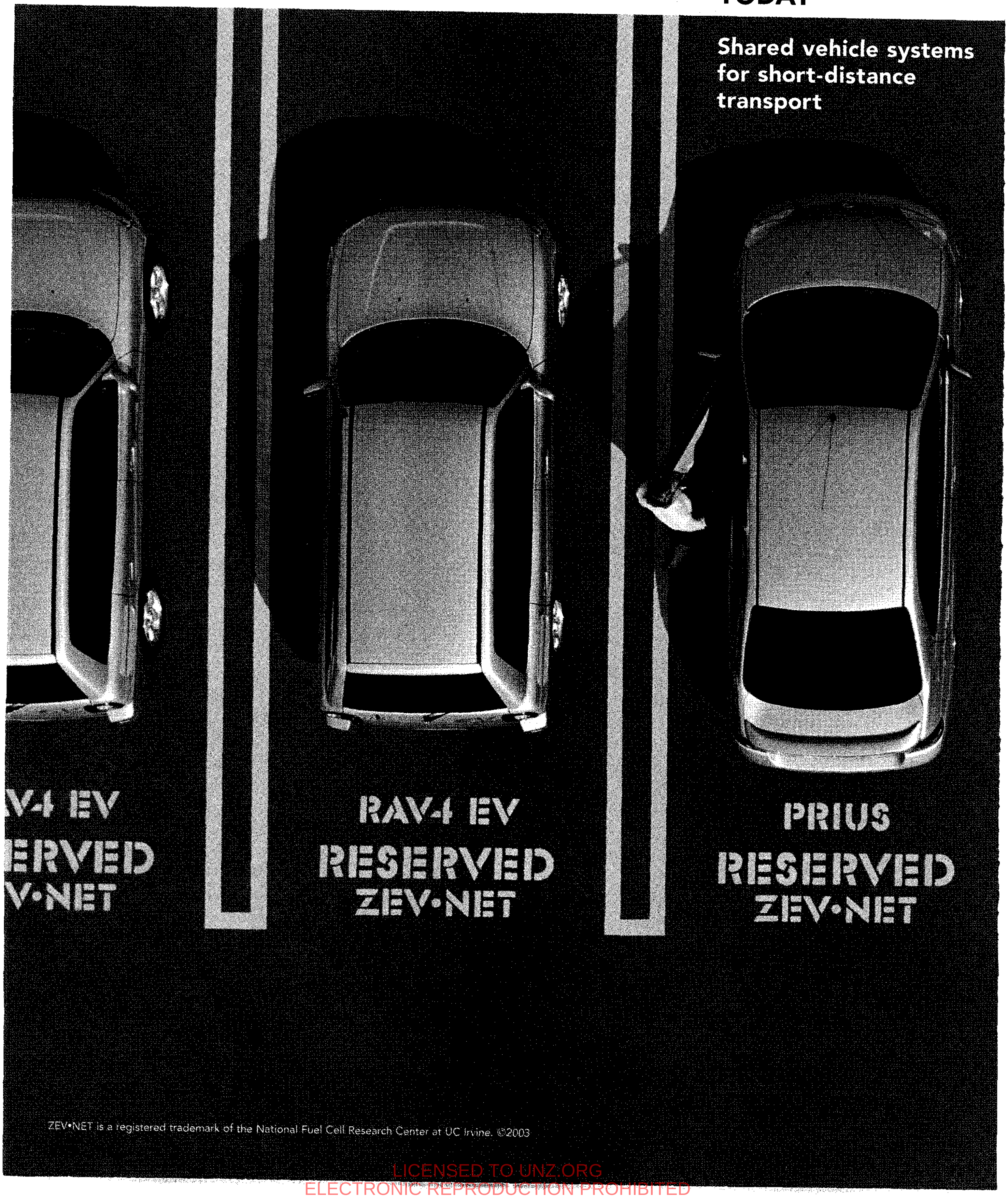
—*Dana Goodyear*

MY GUILTY PLEASURES

Those of us in the "literary game" often have "guilty pleasures" that we indulge in when not translating Cicero from the Latin into the German and then back into the Latin, to see how funny it sounds. My favorite guilty pleasure is watching the new TV series "The Bachelor: Who Screws the Best?," in which an ugly, poor, middle-aged married guy has sex with a series of young women who have been misled into believing that he is handsome, young, and rich, after which he decides which of them to propose to, at which time they are notified that he is actually ugly, poor, and middle-aged. I especially loved the moment when Desiree, the series' "bad girl," said, "Well, I thought there was a lot of hair on his back, but, still, I felt we were really connecting." Also good is the new series "The Bachelor: Actually He Is Dead," in which a group of young women attempt to win the favor of a propped-up, moldering corpse that they have been told is a young, handsome rich guy who is alive. It's still sort of hard for me to believe that none of them—not the Lawyer, not the Senior Account Rep, not the Homeless Advocate—noticed the team of people behind the bachelor, manipulating his limbs via a system of wires, while a tape recorder on his chest emitted sayings such as "I guess I'm just looking for someone who'll like me for me, even when parts of me fall off" and "Well, as far as my house goes, all I can say is, it's very small and made of wood." I am also looking forward to the new series "The Bachelor: So What If I'm a Raccoon?," in which a group of young women live for six months in a mansion in the South of France with a raccoon they have been told is a human being who recently came into a lot of money. The last episode, where the young women all gang up on Jake, kill him, make a hat out of his fur, and eat him, promises to be a ratings bonanza. Also worthy of note is the new series "The Hag," in which a very tiny, wiry woman who is over a hundred years old is locked in a mansion in the South of France with three thousand muscular young men, who must fight one another with clubs and mallets to see which of them will be allowed to leave the house. When all of the men but one are gone, she reveals that she is actually a beautiful young heiress, at which time he reveals that he is actually a raccoon, after which she has sex with him, kills him, then makes a hat out of him and wears it to a day spa. But, if I had to choose, I guess I would have to say that my favorite guilty pleasure is the new series "How Weird Is That?," in which a group of bureaucrats who have never themselves fought in a war are locked in the "Decision House" and allowed to select any country in the world for America to go to war with, for reasons they must invent on the spot. The candid shots of clueless families in the chosen country being blown apart as American bombers pass by overhead, along with the quick cuts back to the Decision House, where a group of young women are deciding which of the bureaucrats to marry (having been told that the bureaucrats are actually leaders of a great nation), make this a real "can't miss" program.

—*George Saunders*

TODAY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TOMORROW

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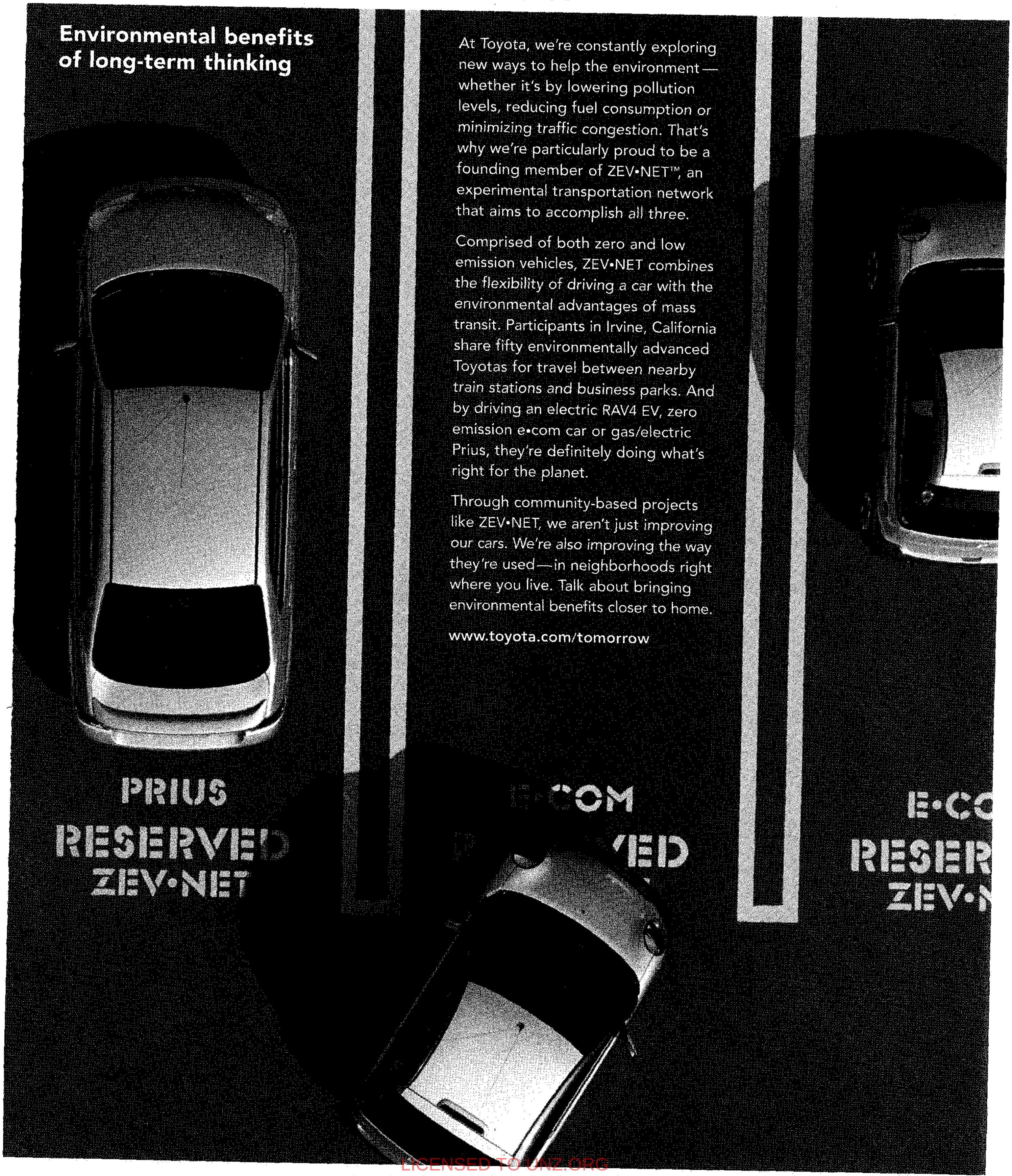

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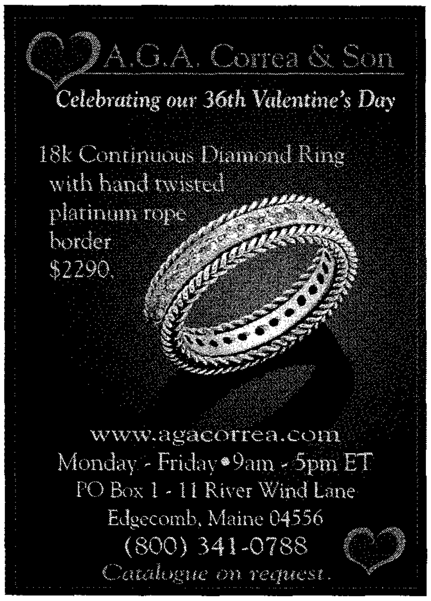

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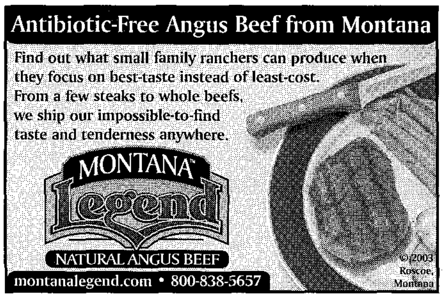

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ANNALS OF LAW

LUNCH AT MARTHA'S

Problems with the perfect life.

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN

Martha Stewart's house is not the biggest one on her street in Westport, Connecticut, but the shrubbery gives away its owner. The bushes aren't just wrapped in burlap, the ne plus ultra of winterization; the fabric has been tailored to fit the precise dimensions of each plant.

Turkey Hill, as the restored 1805 farmhouse is known, has been Stewart's home and principal laboratory for more than twenty-five years. Even for someone who doesn't read her magazines, watch her television shows, buy her books and housewares, or otherwise assimilate the Martha Stewart brand, the interior feels somehow familiar; such is the ubiquity of her style. The rooms are small, and a tour of the ground floor doesn't take long. Even though Stewart has dogs (Chow Chows named Paw Paw and Chin Chin) and Himalayan cats (females known as Teeny and Weeny, and males called Mozart, Verdi, Vivaldi, Berlioz, and Bartók), the house is dominated by American song canaries, which screech continuously inside a pair of antique cages. Stewart used to have five of them, but it's mating season, and there are now about thirty. "Listen," she insisted on a recent Sunday afternoon when I paid a visit. "It's a happy sound."

Martha Stewart may hear music in her birds' wailing, but she cannot pretend that there's been much harmony in her life since December 27, 2001. That was when she sold her stock in a biotechnology company called ImClone, and for most of the time since then she has been under investigation for insider trading—by the Justice Department, by the Securities and Exchange Commission, and by Congress. Lawyers familiar with the inquiry say that the criminal investigation is near a resolution, and prosecutors in the U.S. Attorney's office, who won't comment, will decide in the next several weeks whether to indict Stewart. Meanwhile, the bankruptcy of Kmart, where Stewart has long sold her line of products for the home, has threatened the future of her business. All of this has sent shares in her company, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, plummeting.

As unpleasant as the insider-trading investigation has been, the coverage by the press—a cascade of ridicule and abuse—may have been harder to take. A mock magazine cover of *Martha Stewart Living Behind Bars* circulated widely on the Internet. Conan O'Brien quoted Stewart as saying "a subpoena should be served with a nice appetizer." David Letterman said in a monologue that Lizzie Grubman, the publicist who pleaded guilty to running down night-club customers in her car, had been complaining about the food in jail. "Hang on until Martha Stewart gets there!" Letterman urged.

I first asked to speak to Stewart shortly after the ImClone investigation began, and it wasn't until recently that some of her advisers, frustrated by the bad publicity, saw that there might be advantages for their client in such an interview. Under the terms of my agreement with these advisers, who were present for our conversation, Stewart would discuss her feelings about the investigation, and the public reaction, but wouldn't speak on the record about the facts. As we walked around the house, Stewart looked buoyant and confident, stopping for a nose-to-nose nuzzle with Paw Paw by the wicker basket where he sleeps. But when she sat down at the dining-room table, lined up three pens beside her, and began to talk about the past year, she suddenly looked weary. Schadenfreude? I asked. "That's the word," she said. "I hear that, like, every day." And she added, in her precise way, "Do you know how to spell it?"

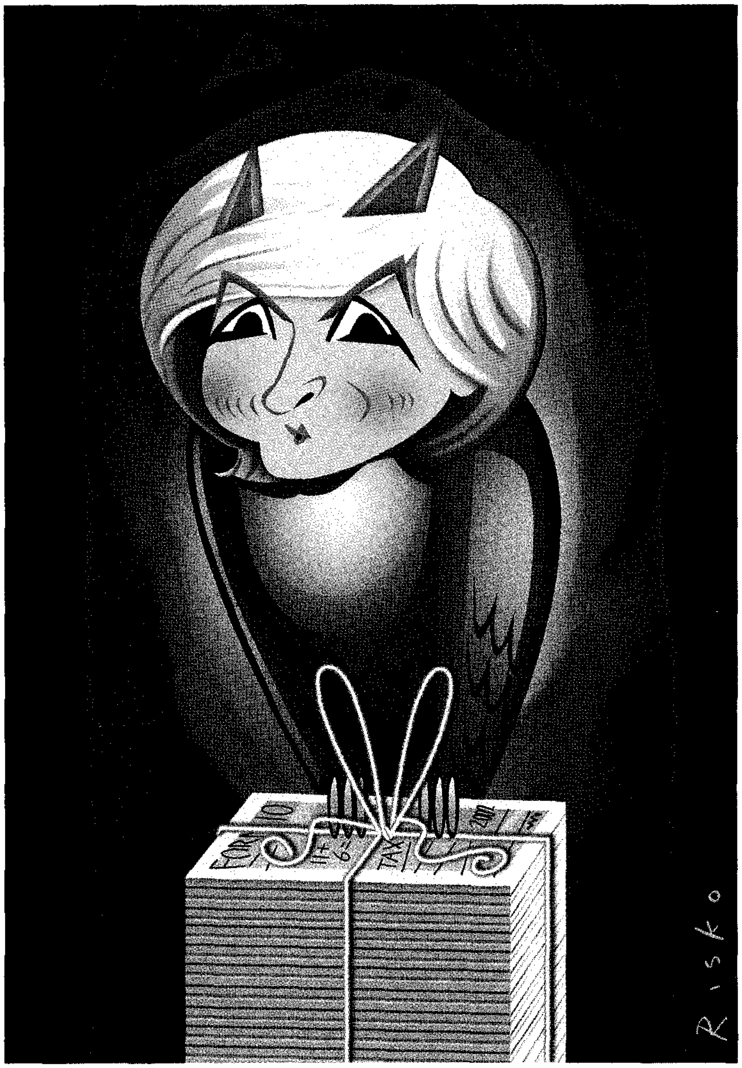
Then Stewart, describing the reaction to her plight, went on, "Well, that's puzzling to me, O.K., that's puzzling and also confusing, because my public image has been one of trustworthiness, of being a fine, fine editor, a fine purveyor of historical and contemporary information for the homemaker. My business is about homemaking. And that I have been turned into or vilified openly as something other than what I really am has been really confusing." She said, "I mean, we've produced a lot of good stuff for a lot of good people. And to be maligned for that is kind of weird."

On an unlined white writing pad, which matched her pens, Stewart had written a few notes about topics she wanted to cover, and one, it seemed, was the nature of fame. "It's sort of the American way to go up and down the ladder, maybe several times in a lifetime. And I've had a real long up—along the way my heels being bitten at for various reasons, maybe perfectionism, or maybe exactitude, or something. And now I've had a long way down."

Throughout our talk, Stewart monitored various animal sounds in the house and several times asked her cook, Lily, "Who's crying?" Stewart didn't want any of the cats outdoors, because Beethoven, one of the male cats, had recently escaped and been killed by a car.

Stewart looked cheerier when she recalled the support she's received—from Hillary Clinton, for one. "Look at her ups and downs," she said. "And she was one of the first people to call me after the article"—announcing the investigation—"and very nicely say, 'You know, you just have to hang in there. It's the process.' " Stewart continued, "First Lady, knocked to death and now senator. You know, a very important person, still. Because she's smart, she's worthy, she's great. You know, that's what I hope I'll be thought of as."

And, like Bill Clinton, Stewart said, "I'm real lucky, because I am able to sort of compartmentalize, as other people who have been successful compartmentalize. I can be concerned on one hand, and be productive on the other hand. And that's a good trait for me. And I'm very physically strong. So my work is my distraction. And that's a fabulous thing." The sixty-one-year-old Stewart added, "I can still sleep. I can still sleep my three or four hours."



"Work is my distraction," Martha Stewart says. "That's a fabulous thing."

ROBERT RISKO

In an afternoon of conversation, Stewart generally declined to fire back at her tormentors; she has no complaint with the late-night comics, who used to welcome her. "My buddies—Dave, Jay, Conan," she said with a sigh. "I miss the fun. They have a job to do, they can comment on anybody in a playful way, and I don't think it's at all damaging. In other parts of the press, more damaging. In terms of photography, even more damaging." She's particularly bothered by the photographs that appear in the *Post*, which often show her looking haggard and distraught. "The ugliest pictures. And I'm a pretty photogenic person, I mean, and they manage to find the doozies," she said. *Newsweek*, too: "They had a list of pictures of people, and the pluses and the minuses of the people's lives during the year. And it said next to mine, 'If she had been nicer to people on the way up, they'd be nicer to her on the way down.' I've never not been nice to anybody."

When we took a lunch break, it was clear that the wounds of the past year ran deep. After I admired the silver chopsticks that had been set out, Stewart said, "You know, in China they say, 'The thinner the chopsticks, the higher the social status.' Of course, I got the thinnest I could find." After a pause, she added, "That's why people hate me."

The accusations against Stewart are straightforward and, by now, familiar to readers of everything from *Institutional Investor* to *People*. On December 26, 2001, Stewart's old friend Samuel Waksal, the chief executive of ImClone, learned that the Food and Drug Administration was going to reject the company's highly touted cancer drug, Erbitux. Knowing that the stock would plunge when this news became public, Waksal immediately tried to sell tens of thousands of shares of ImClone and encouraged his father and daughter to sell, too. For these actions, Waksal has pleaded guilty to insider trading, among other crimes, and faces as much as twelve years in prison when he is sentenced, in March. On December 27th, Stewart sold all of her stock in ImClone—3,928 shares, at fifty-eight dollars a share—grossing about two hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars. The claim is that Stewart did so because she had an illegal tip. Stewart, though, has told investigators that she sold because she had a preëxisting agreement with her stockbroker, Peter Bacanovic, of Merrill Lynch, to sell Im-

"Shaving your head takes the guesswork out of going bald."

• •

Clone when the stock fell below sixty dollars a share. Stewart's explanation was rejected by the bipartisan leadership of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce; in a letter to Attorney General John Ashcroft, the congressmen said that their investigations "cause us to be deeply skeptical of Ms. Stewart's accounts, and raise a serious question as to whether those accounts were false, misleading, and designed to conceal material facts." Presented in such stark terms, the case against Stewart appears at the very least plausible, and perhaps compelling. Last June, a House committee spokesperson said, "As the coincidences pile up, the possibility that no one knew anything goes way down." But it is possible to give the web of seemingly incriminating relationships a more benign interpretation.

Stewart's connection to Bacanovic actually dates from the mid-eighties, when he attended Columbia and became friends with Stewart's daughter, Alexis, who was at Barnard. Peter was "just like a member of the family," according to a source close to the Stewarts. For several years, Alexis dated Sam Waksal, who was about twenty years her senior, and she introduced Bacanovic to the biotech entrepreneur. Bacanovic worked briefly for Waksal at ImClone, but he left that job and in 1993 became a stockbroker at Merrill Lynch. Like many young brokers, Bacanovic tried to find clients through his friends and their parents, and he found two of them through Alexis: Martha Stewart and Sam Waksal.

In the nineties, both Stewart and Waksal thrived by outfoxing larger competitors. Waksal's company was developing Erbitux, which showed promise in treating colon cancer, and he parlayed the drug into a lucrative partnership with Bristol-Myers Squibb. Stewart, who had a brief career as a stockbroker when she was in her twenties, started a catering business out of Turkey Hill, wrote a best-selling guide to entertaining, built an alliance with Kmart, and created *Martha Stewart Living*, along with several spinoff publications and television programs.

At first, Stewart published her magazines in a corporate marriage with Time Warner, but in 1997, with Waksal's help, she negotiated an advantageous split that gave her full control. According to sources close to Stewart, she invested in ImClone in a gesture of support for her friend. In January of 1999, she spent eighty thousand dollars to buy twenty-five hundred shares at thirty-two dollars a share—a distinctly minor financial event in a year when Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia went public, giving her, for a time, a net worth of more than a billion dollars. Even after a stock split at ImClone raised Stewart's holding to five thousand shares, her investment in Waksal's company was just three-hundredths of one per cent of her total net worth, according to people familiar with her finances.

The value of ImClone shares rose in the two years that Stewart owned them, and, as has been widely reported, she tried to sell her entire stake in the company in October of 2001, when Bristol-Myers made a tender offer for ImClone stock at seventy dollars a share. The tender offer was oversubscribed, however, and Bristol-Myers bought only 1,072 of Stewart's shares, leaving 3,928 shares in her portfolio.

For a billionaire C.E.O.—especially one who was both the principal asset and the actual manager of her company—overseeing such small holdings was a poor use of time. In 2001, Stewart had accounts at Bear Stearns and Morgan Stanley, as well as Bacanovic's account at Merrill Lynch. Because Bacanovic and his counterparts were stockbrokers, not money managers, they had to get Stewart's personal approval for each transaction, and those close to her say that she wanted to stop fielding these calls. Late in 2001, Stewart decided to consolidate her stock holdings in the Merrill Lynch account—and then sell most of them and turn the bulk of her fortune over to a professional money manager. Stewart's holdings in the consolidated Bacanovic account totalled just four-tenths of one per cent of her personal wealth, which remained concentrated in stock in her company and in real-estate holdings, these sources say.

During late 2001, Stewart talked to Jeff Ubben, who manages a San Francisco-based investment partnership, about investing in Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia. Stewart and Ubben became friendly, and they discussed her personal finances as well as her company. (Ubben's fund made a substantial purchase of her shares, and he joined the board of Stewart's company in 2002.) "I approached her in November, 2001, and said, 'You've never sold any of your own stock,' " Ubben told me. " 'You should take some money off the table as an insurance policy. You're still paying mortgages on your properties.' She was a reluctant seller. She asked me if I knew any money managers and said she was in the process of getting out of the stock market. The implication was that she was selling all of her individual stock holdings." Heidi DeLuca serves as Stewart's business manager, and she has confirmed to investigators, a person close to her says, that Stewart sold "a lot" of stock in late 2001.

In most ways, things were going well for Stewart at that time. The stock market had begun its long slide, but Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia was still thriving, its shares selling for around eighteen dollars—down, however, from a high of thirty-seven. At the same time, the status of ImClone was far less secure. The company had bet its future on Erbitux, and had few sources of current revenue. Still, Waksal lived exceedingly well, entertaining on a grand scale at his loft in SoHo. His annual Christmas party, on December 6th, drew two hundred people, including his friend Mick Jagger. Stewart was there, and so was an Italian millionaire named Jean Pigozzi, who owned a few thousand acres of coastal land in Panama. Waksal and Stewart were planning to charter a helicopter together to fly from Panama City to an island off the coast for Pigozzi's fiftieth-birthday party, just after the first of the year.

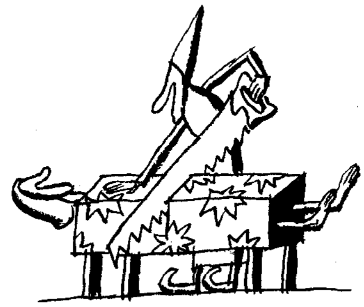
As Christmas approached, Waksal gave few hints that he and his company were near a crisis. On December 14th, Stewart had her own Christmas party, a sitdown dinner for almost a hundred people at the downtown restaurant Chanterelle. Waksal didn't show up until dessert, but he was known for that kind of erratic behavior. According to phone records submitted to government investigators, there were a handful of short calls between some of Stewart's and Waksal's phone numbers over the next week or so, but people in the Stewart camp assert that these calls were between assistants and dealt mainly with the logistics of reserving the helicopter in Panama. Stewart was planning to spend a few days at the Mexican resort of Cabo San Lucas before Pigozzi's party, and at 9:17 A.M. on December 27th Stewart's private plane took off from a small airport in Connecticut near Turkey Hill.

When Stewart and I sat down to lunch, Lily had already placed a steaming pot of chicken in the center of the table. "Hunan chicken," Stewart announced. "This is the best way to cook chicken in the whole world." The scent of coriander and ginger was in the air. "Write this down," Stewart instructed, and then gave me the recipe:

> Place a whole chicken in a bowl and cover seven-eighths of it with water. Season with sliced ginger, coriander, salt and pepper. Add ginkgos to water. Place bowl on a rack in a stock pot, and add water to pot, covering most of bowl. OK to use a spaghetti pot. Cook one hour.

"The only problem," she explained, "is if you like crispy skin." Her kitchen is dense with Stewart touches: forty-eight gleaming copper pots hang above the stove, hundreds of antique dishes fill the glass-fronted cabinets, and the dishwashing liquid is decanted into a glass cruet beside the sink. Still, I said, it's a pretty small room to produce much food. Not to worry, she replied, smiling. "I have eighteen burners in an annex in back."

Stewart has, to be sure, endured a gilded purgatory. She recently returned from a cruise on the two-hundred-and-thirty-foot yacht of her friend Charles Simonyi, a former Microsoft executive. Near Malta, they came across an American warship; by dinghy, they sent a formal invitation to the ship's commanders to join them for New Year's Eve cocktails. "My friends doubted they would come, but I assure you they accepted with alacrity," Stewart told me. "When they arrived, about seven of them, they all said they had e-mailed their wives, saying *they were coming to see me*."



At this point, Lily reappeared from the kitchen annex with another dish: slow-cooked spicy beef. Then there was sticky rice with mushrooms and bacon. It was followed by a platter of baby cabbages arranged in a perfect oval around steamed little mushrooms. After that, Lily brought stone-crab legs in garlic-and-black-bean sauce, stir-fried green beans, and vegetable lo mein with homemade noodles. "Oh!" Stewart gasped at one point, reaching with a spoon toward the broth of the chicken that had opened this feast. "I forgot to serve the ginkgos!"

This easily parodied attention to detail has not helped Stewart's cause. How could this woman, who appears to stay in touch with everything that affects her, not know that her good friend Sam Waksal was trying to dump his stock at the same time that she was selling hers? Even if she did, knowing that is not necessarily the same thing as breaking insider-trading laws—laws that operate by specific rules. "Insider trading is misuse of information by someone who has an obligation to keep that information confidential," said William R. Baker III, who recently stepped down as associate director of the division of enforcement at the Securities and Exchange Commission. "Insider trading is a form of fraud, and you have to have some fraudulent intent. If you don't know that the information is acquired in breach of some legal duty, you lack the intent necessary to show insider trading." In other words, in order to prove that Stewart engaged in insider trading, the government would have to prove several things: that she received information from someone with a legal duty to keep it confidential, that she knew this person was making an improper disclosure, and that she traded on the basis of that information. It might be difficult for the government to prove any of this, much less all of it, about Stewart's sale of ImClone.

December 27, 2001, began gloriously for Stewart. She was off to Cabo San

Lucas with a pair of old friends, Mariana Pasternak, a real-estate broker in Westport, and Kevin Sharkey, the decorating editor of *Martha Stewart Living* and a frequent travelling companion. Since it was two days after the holiday, Stewart surprised her friends with a present—a lavish airborne Christmas breakfast, including champagne, caviar, foie gras, and fresh melba toast. On the plane, Stewart settled into her seat and worked on her latest book project, "Homekeeping," which is meant to be a complete guide to home décor and maintenance. At 1:26 P.M., according to records turned over to the government, Stewart's plane landed in San Antonio for refuelling. Stewart stepped out to stretch and, while standing on the windy tarmac, with planes taking off and landing around her, placed a cell-phone call at 1:31 P.M. to a personal assistant, Ann E. Armstrong, to check messages. That call—which has become perhaps the most important telephone call of Martha Stewart's life—lasted eleven minutes.

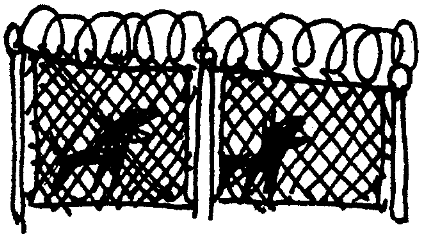
Sometime after ten that morning, Armstrong had received a call from Bacanovic, and her written message said, "Peter Bacanovic thinks ImClone is going to start trading downward." Since Stewart and her lawyers have told investigators that she and Bacanovic had agreed, before December 27th, that she would sell ImClone if it dropped below sixty dollars a share, the investigation of Stewart presumes that she concocted the sixty-dollar agreement to cover the fact that she got an illegal tip.

Did Stewart have a preëxisting sell order for ImClone stock? Sources familiar with her account insist that the sixty-dollar plan emerged out of her late-2001 financial housecleaning, after the Bristol-Myers tender offer. Through his lawyers, Bacanovic has corroborated Stewart's version, and he turned over to investigators a copy of a Merrill Lynch summary of Stewart's account where he had scribbled "60" by ImClone. Heidi DeLuca, Stewart's business manager, has told investigators that she, too, had a discussion with Bacanovic about his plan to tell Stewart to sell ImClone at sixty. (The *Wall Street Journal* reported last week that investigators from the U.S. Attorney's office want to interview additional witnesses at Merrill Lynch.)

Stewart could have avoided any controversy by entering a stop-loss order for ImClone, which, on December 27th, first traded below sixty dollars at 11:07 A.M. (A stop-loss order allows brokerage customers to sell a stock automatically when it hits a predetermined price.) As the congressmen wrote to Ashcroft, "If there had been such an agreed understanding between Ms. Stewart and her broker, one would have expected that Ms. Stewart—a former stockbroker, New York Stock Exchange Board member, and sophisticated businesswoman—would have executed a stop-loss order, obviating any need for her broker to contact her, especially as she was heading to Mexico on vacation." But sources say that Stewart never uses stop-loss orders on any stock, preferring instead to make individual judgments about each holding—which may contradict her wish to be free from involvement in small holdings.

In any event, Stewart didn't seem too concerned about ImClone even after Armstrong relayed Bacanovic's message. According to Susan Brune, who is Armstrong's lawyer, Armstrong remembers that she patched Stewart through to at least one caller from her own company before she connected her to Merrill Lynch. But at some point in the eleven-minute call Armstrong did put Stewart through to Bacanovic's office. In a letter to congressional investigators, Stewart's lawyers say she spoke to Bacanovic himself from the tarmac, but that seems unlikely. Bacanovic was on vacation in Miami on December 27th, and though he was in touch with his office by telephone and e-mail and called Armstrong, the person answering his phone that day was his twenty-seven-year-old assistant, Douglas Faneuil.

Stewart remembers a brief phone call, according to people familiar with her account. She asked what was going on with ImClone and was told that the price had fallen below sixty; she asked about trading volume in the stock and was told that it was heavy. (In fact, there was near-panic selling of ImClone on December 27th, when almost eight million shares changed hands, compared with about a million and a half shares on December 26th.) Stewart agreed to the sale, which was put through at 1:43 P.M., immediately after she got off the phone.

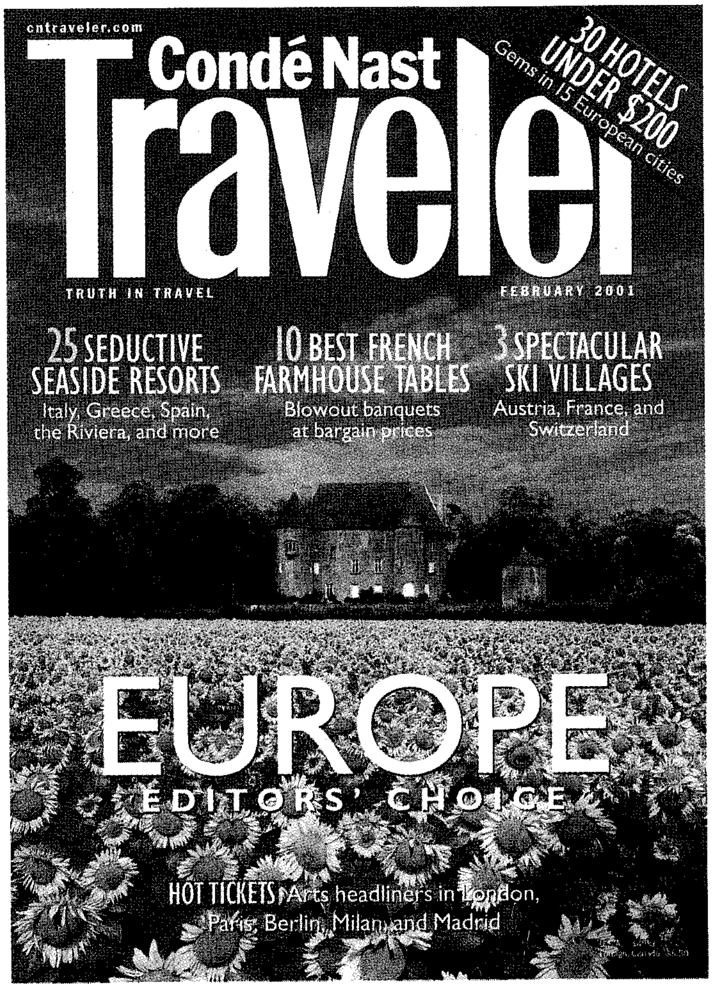


On October 2, 2002, Faneuil pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of misleading investigators about the content of his phone call with Stewart. In his guilty plea, Faneuil said that Stewart knew that Waksal was unloading his shares of ImClone. Stewart has told investigators that she has no memory of being told that anyone in the Waksal family was selling. But if Faneuil's version is correct—and he has no apparent reason to lie at this point—does that make Stewart guilty of insider trading? "She would have to know that the broker was doing something wrong in giving her the information," Adam Pritchard, a former S.E.C. lawyer who is now a professor at the University of Michigan law school, said. "If she doesn't know that Bacanovic is Waksal's broker, then there is no violation." Stewart has told friends that in the late nineties Bacanovic told her that he was no longer working with Waksal. This claim, too, will likely be met with considerable skepticism, because Stewart, Bacanovic, and Waksal had been friends for so long. But it will also be hard for the government to disprove Stewart's claim, so her purported ignorance of the relationship between Bacanovic and Waksal adds another difficulty to a successful prosecution of her.

A greater problem for prosecutors is Stewart's plan to liquidate most of her stock portfolio—a claim that she apparently will be able to corroborate with the records of the sales. "If she can show that she has a preëxisting plan to sell the stock, she doesn't have to abort that plan because of some intervening information that she receives," Pritchard said. In other words, the government would have to prove not only that Stewart knew about the Waksals' sales but that she knew this information had been improperly passed on to her and, finally, that she did not already plan to sell ImClone.

After the eleven-minute call to her office, Stewart made one more call from the tarmac. At 1:43 P.M., she dialled Waksal's office, leaving a message that was recorded by his secretary as "Martha

PURE PLEASURE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Stewart something is going on with ImClone and she wants to know what She is on her way to Mexico she is staying at Los Ventanos." If Waksal (or someone else) had already given Stewart an illegal tip to sell her shares, and she had already made the sale, it is not clear why she would bother to leave that message. After she arrived in Mexico, Stewart spoke to her daughter, Alexis, and mentioned that she had sold her shares in ImClone. According to people familiar with her account, Alexis has told government investigators that she and her mother speculated that night about whether Sam Waksal would be angry at Martha for selling—an unlikely subject if Waksal's own sales had prompted Stewart's trade.

Stewart spent several days in Mexico and then made her way to Pigozzi's birthday party in Panama. Waksal missed Stewart's helicopter ride to the Pigozzi place, but he did straggle in a day later. People familiar with Stewart's account say she greeted her old friend by saying, "Where the hell have you been? You haven't talked to me since my party."

At Turkey Hill, dessert was served in the dining room. Lily brought a tray of fresh fruit, including sliced melon, sections of orange and grapefruit, peeled litchis, and something called longans, which I didn't recognize. "It means 'dragon's eyes,'" Lily explained.

Stewart estimates that the investigation has so far cost her about four hundred million dollars, mostly in the decline in value of her thirty-plus million shares of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, but also in legal fees and lost business opportunities. (Last year, the stock traded as low as five, but has rebounded to about nine.) Stewart's personal visibility has been greatly reduced, except for her pre-taped syndicated television program. Her only public discussion of her predicament came during an excruciating appearance on the CBS "Early Show" on June 25th. Stewart was conducting one of her regular cooking segments, and was using a large knife to chop a head of cabbage. "I think this will all be resolved in the very near future and I will be exonerated of any ridiculousness," Stewart told the host, Jane Clayson. "I want to focus on my salad, because that's why we're here." CBS News would not agree to forgo further questioning about the ImClone matter, so Stewart suspended her association with the program.

This was painful, because Stewart so obviously loves every aspect of the world she has created for herself. And though some may view her as an over-the-top caricature, the Martha Stewart persona is no act. As our elaborate feast unfolded, Stewart ate each course with gusto. When I admired the dishes on display in the cabinets, she said, "You'd be even more amazed if you looked at each one." Woe to the prosecutor (or congressman) who underestimates Stewart's commitment and determination.

As the afternoon darkened, Stewart seemed almost to gain energy. It was no surprise that she vowed never to walk away from her company. "Quit a business that is my life?" she said. "Impossible." Indeed, despite the trauma of the last year, she was concentrating on areas where her company could grow. She launched a line of furniture this year and a digest-size magazine—part of a long-range plan, she said, to give the company an identity beyond her own image. The new magazine is called *Everyday Food*, and it contains only a small reference to Stewart on the cover. "We're not hiding the fact that it's from *Martha Stewart Living*," she said. "It's just unnecessary to have it that gigantic on the cover." In this kind of differentiation, Stewart's role model is Ralph Lauren, who created Polo, Purple Label, and other brands less directly tied to his name. "He was able to expand his empire greatly by different brand labels," she said.

In a strange way, Stewart said, she had almost anticipated her current crisis, if not its precise form. From the moment that she and her colleagues launched Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, they talked about the chance that she could suddenly leave the company, and they tried to build it with that possibility in mind. "We call it 'the bus'—the wayward bus, getting hit by the bus," she said. "You know, those 'D' things—death, dismemberment, dementia, disappearance, whatever they all are. All those 'D' things." As it turned out, though, it wasn't a bus. "It was something else," she said, quickly adding, "But I'm alive. There's the big difference." ♦

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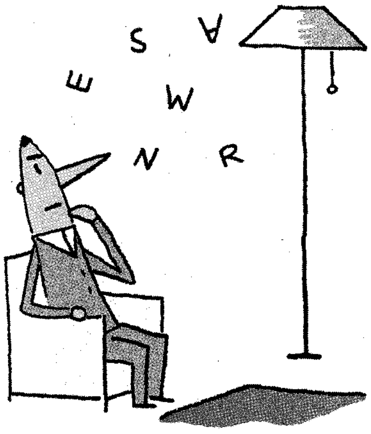
SHOUTS & MURMURS

BRAINTEASERS: THE AFTERMATH

BY DON STEINBERG

PROBLEM: In a terrible car accident, a man is killed and his son is rushed to the hospital for surgery. As the boy is wheeled into the operating room, the surgeon looks at the patient and says, "I cannot operate on this child. He is my son." How is this possible?

ANSWER: The surgeon is the boy's mother.



SUBSEQUENTLY: Interns plead with the female surgeon, saying that her stubbornness about operating on the boy is jeopardizing his health, yet she steadfastly refuses. It is decided that the boy's broken foot must wait until another surgeon is summoned. Suddenly, the door bursts open—it is the boy's father, alive. "Just do the surgery, Elaine!" he shouts.

"Hey," she replies, "do I come to your job and tell you how to drive?"

PROBLEM: A king wants to hire a royal adviser, so he invites his kingdom's three wisest men to engage in a contest of wits. He sits them down facing one another and walks behind them, putting a cap on each man's head. He tells them that he has given each of them a red cap or a white cap; in fact, he has placed red caps on all three heads. No one can see what he himself is wearing; there are no mirrors or other ways to cheat. The king says, "Raise your hand if you see someone wearing a red hat." All three men raise their hands. Then the king says, "All right, now, if you know what color your cap is, stand up."

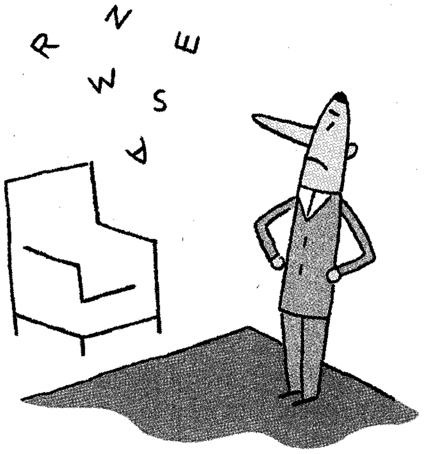
PHILIPPE PETIT-ROULET

For several minutes, no one moves. Then wise man No. 3 stands up. "I am wearing a red cap!" he proclaims. How did he know?

ANSWER: Wise man No. 3 first imagined himself wearing a white cap. "If I have a white cap," he reasoned, "then when wise man No. 2 raised his hand he must have been looking at wise man No. 1's red cap. Wise man No. 1, being smart, would have realized immediately that the red cap seen by No. 2 had to be his, and he would have stood up. Wise man No. 2 would have reached the same conclusion and he would have stood up quickly as well. Since neither of the others stood up, I must not be wearing a white cap. I must be wearing a red one."

SUBSEQUENTLY: Wise man No. 3 is made the king's royal adviser. Two days later, the king consults with him. "The people of my kingdom are unhappy," he says. "There is much misery and disease, farmland lies fallow, and war may be imminent. What shall I do?"

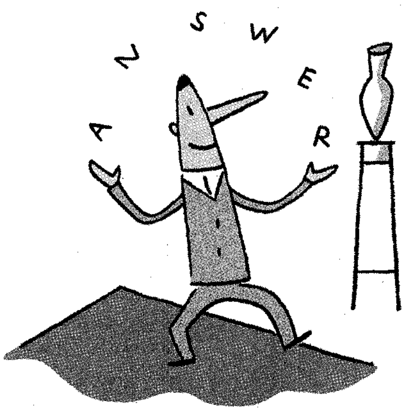
The wise man thinks for a moment. Then he says, "Sire, do any of those people happen to be wearing a red hat?"



PROBLEM: I was born in Boston, and my parents were born in Boston. Yet I was not born a United States citizen. How is this possible?

ANSWER: I was born before 1776, before the United States was created.

SUBSEQUENTLY: Like many others, I became a proud U.S. citizen in 1776. The ensuing years have been arduous for me, and I bear no small shame for the unholy means by which I have sustained myself for more than two centuries. You see, I am not only a U.S. citizen . . . I am also a vampire.



PROBLEM: A traveller visits an island inhabited by two types of people, knights and knaves. Knights always tell the truth; knaves always lie. The visitor falls in love with a local girl and wants to marry her. But before marrying he wants to be sure she is not a knave. An island tradition prohibits men from speaking to women until they are married. So the traveller must ask the girl's brother, who may be a knight or a knave and is not necessarily the same type as his sister. The traveller is allowed to ask the brother one question to find out if his potential bride-to-be is a knave. What is the question?

ANSWER: Are you and your sister of the same type? If the brother answers yes, then, no matter whether he is a knight or a knave, his sister must be a knight. If the brother answers no, the sister must be a knave.

SUBSEQUENTLY: The bride's brutal honesty soon sours the marriage, and the visitor leaves the strange island heartbroken, vowing never again to book travel through the Internet. Knights and knaves gradually intermarry, and within three generations everybody on the island lies occasionally, at unpredictable times. ♦

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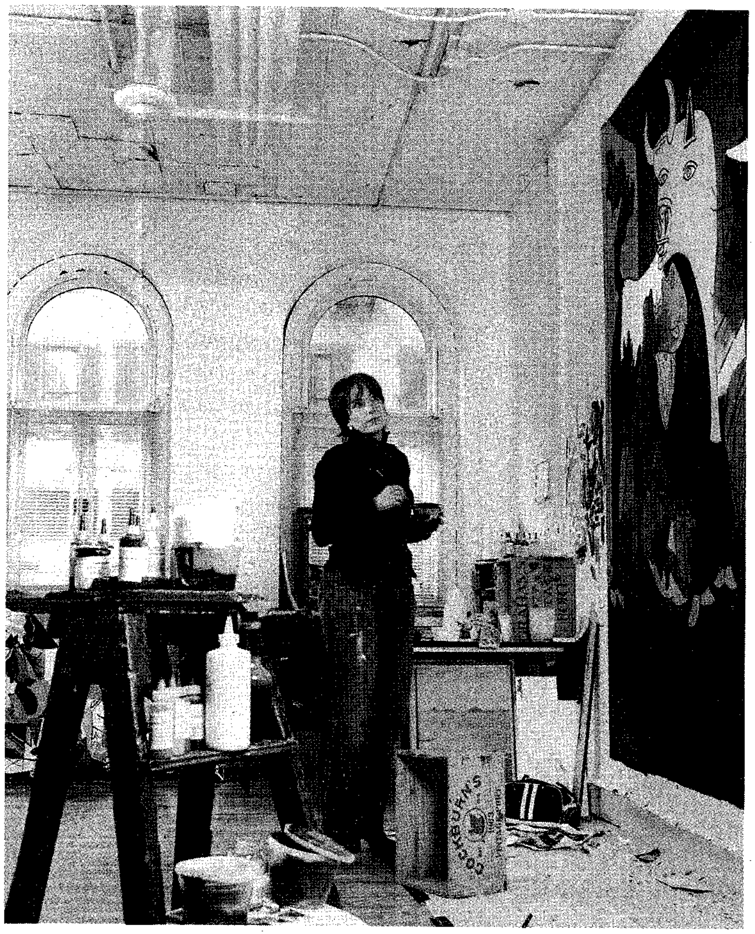
ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

SOPHIE'S "GUERNICA"

Can a Matisse paint a Picasso?

BY ALEC WILKINSON



The artist at work in her studio in Tribeca. Photograph by Andrea Artz.

The idea of making a copy of Picasso's "Guernica" as Matisse might have done it was suggested to Sophie Matisse by her dealer, Francis Naumann. Naumann is a bit of an art-world wise guy. He was the curator of "Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York," at the Whitney Museum, in 1996, and he is also an authority on Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp, who happens to have been Sophie Matisse's step-grandfather; Duchamp married Alexina Matisse, known as Teeny, after she was divorced from Pierre Matisse, Henri Matisse's son.

Naumann is fifty-four, and Sophie, who is Matisse's great-granddaughter, is thirty-seven. They have known each other for almost twenty years, ever since Naumann paid a visit to Teeny Duchamp at her house in the country outside Paris. If you ask how Naumann and Sophie met, they tell different versions of the same story. Naumann, who was then an art historian, says that it was raining, and he was picked up at the train station by a svelte and alluring dark-haired young woman (Sophie), and that while they were driving to Teeny Duchamp's she turned to him and said (provocatively, he thought), "Are you the adventurous type of art historian?" Before he could answer, she veered off the road and headed through some trees into a field, where the car bogged down to the axles, and they had to dig it out. Sophie's account includes no erotic subtext. She says that she was spending the summer at her grandmother's house, and was often sent to the station to fetch the art-world types who made small, pious pilgrimages to Duchamp's widow. On the way was a shortcut—a tractor path that was barely visible between trees. Having found out what her passenger did, Sophie liked to ask whether he or she was the adventurous version. There was almost immediately an impact as the wheels left the pavement, and then the critic or the curator would be bumping down a rutty old road that could only partly be made out. "People would arrive at the house all shaken up," Sophie says. "They had started out excited about meeting Teeny Duchamp at her house in the country—a perfect art-critic day!—and now they can't stop worrying about the ride back to the train."

In January of 2002, Sophie, who lives in New York, had a show at Naumann's gallery, Francis M. Naumann Fine Art, on East Eightieth Street. The show, her first, consisted of twenty-one deft reproductions of modern and Old Master paintings by, among others, Degas, Hopper, Vermeer, and Grant Wood, from which Sophie had removed the people or, in the still-lifes, some of the objects. Without the figures, the paintings were spooky and unsettling. One critic described them as "pronounced statements of absence." The first painting from which she removed a figure was the Mona Lisa. Sophie is married to the French Pop artist Alain Jacquet, and one night in 1997 they were looking at a book of variations made from the painting, including Duchamp's version of the Mona Lisa, with a mustache, an image that Sophie remembers from her childhood. Turning the pages, she suddenly thought, What if the Mona Lisa just got up and left? Her version of the painting has the hills in the background and the river running through the lowland, and in the foreground the balustrade that the Mona Lisa was standing in front of. Sophie called the painting "The Monna Lisa (Be Back in Five Minutes)." Naumann first saw it on display in the vault of a bank in Tribeca. Because the real "Mona Lisa" is probably the most valuable painting in the world, Sophie thought it would be funny to show it in a bank vault. To attach it to the metal wall, she glued magnets to the frame. The show at Naumann's gallery also included her version of her great-grandfather's "Goldfish," without the goldfish in the bowl on the table, and a version of Picasso's "Woman in the Mirror," without the woman. To Naumann, the noteworthy thing about the Picasso was that without the woman the painting looked like what he calls "a very austere, Nice-period Matisse"; that is, a Matisse painted between 1918 and 1930, when the artist lived at a series of hotels in Nice.

Last September, Naumann decided to close his gallery and do more writing. He called Sophie to tell her, and then he called a friend they had in common, an artist named Mike Bidlo. Bidlo told Naumann that he should give Sophie another show before the gallery closed, and he mentioned that if he did so during the winter it would coincide with the Matisse-Picasso exhibition that opens on February 13th at the Museum of Modern Art. When Naumann hung up, he looked absently at his largest wall and suddenly realized that it was roughly the size of "Guernica." "My first impulse," Naumann says, "was that if I want to combine Matisse and Picasso, I was just on the phone with the Matisse."

Initially, Sophie didn't see how the painting could fit her practice of removing figures. She was surprised that Naumann suggested "Guernica," because she had been looking at it lately in books, as a result of 9/11. (She has never seen the actual painting, which hangs in Madrid.) She had been on the street when the first plane passed above her, and she watched it crash into the tower. Given a moment to reflect, she decided that she would love to try painting the Picasso.

Matisse and Picasso—Sophie pronounces it "Pee-casso"—were rivals of a kind. Gertrude Stein once said that they "became friends but that they were also enemies." In the Matisse family, vestiges of their rivalry remain. When Sophie told her mother that she was planning to paint "Guernica," her mother said, "You mean that horrible painting with all the ugly figures?" Her father, who is a sculptor and an inventor, came to New York a few weeks ago, and she brought him to her studio, in Tribeca. They talked about the Matisse-Picasso show, and her father said, "If I never see another Picasso, it won't be the end of my life." Sophie said, "You're in for a surprise." He looked at her sketches and studies, and she thought that she was going to receive a lecture, but instead he asked her, sympathetically, "What's it like drawing the Picasso line, after living with the Matisse one all your life?"

Like indulging in a forbidden thing, she thought, but didn't say.

Sophie grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her father, Paul, was brought up in New York—his father was the dealer Pierre Matisse. He went to Harvard and met her mother, Sarah Barrett, in Boston. Nearly all the other branches of the family are in France. Because no one in Sophie's family talked much about her great-grandfather, she regarded him as an enigmatic figure. As a little girl, she occasionally saw her last name on the walls of museums, from which she concluded that it must be significant. A woman who worked with her mother once took her and one of her three older brothers aside and said, "Tell me the truth, are you really related to Matisse?" She said no, and her brother said yes. Mostly when she asked her father about Matisse, she felt that her question was diverted. Teeny Duchamp spoke fondly of Matisse. "She'd tell me what a wonderful man he was," Sophie says. "She told me that sometimes if she had a problem with Pierre, her husband, she'd talk to Matisse about it. If I managed to get my father to talk about him, though, you might sometimes think he was a monster. One of the few stories I remember was of his being a child in a restaurant with Matisse and having a waiter who took himself to be a comedian. The guy did what he could to provoke a response from the great man, and when it finally arrived it was delivered in the most virulent tone. My impression is there just wasn't a lot of room with him for anybody else."

The family's reluctance to discuss Matisse left Sophie feeling excluded from something essential to her identity. Also obscurely deficient. A real Matisse either would have been let in on the secret or wouldn't have had to ask in the first place. In her studio, she has a photograph of Matisse taken when he was in his sixties. His fingers are cupped as if they were holding a cigarette. "That hand

New Baby
LOUNGE
MATE

I noticed a long time ago," she says. "My grandfather had hands like that, too—squarish fingers, thick and long, but not skinny, and the nails are flat. I would look at my hands and think, The knuckles are like his, the fingers are the same." She also remembers looking at a portrait of her father drawn by her great-grandfather, which hung in the living room of her parents' house. She can draw the portrait quickly from memory—a child's face with a round jaw and hair like waves in water. The ability to reproduce her great-grandfather's supple and shapely line seems to have been passed on to her the way a striking quality of temperament or a cast of mind might persist in another family. The features of the drawing that engaged her most were the nose and the eyebrow. The eyebrow crossed over the left eye, then turned down and formed the nose, like a backward seven. "I looked at it partly because it worked so well," she says, "but also because it broke rules, and that's always interesting for a child."

When Sophie was thirteen or fourteen, she needed money for something, and to raise it she made a series of little Matisse paintings. "Everyone loved them, because they were reminiscent," she says, "but I did it, I think, to establish a connection I felt I wasn't allowed to have."

As a grown woman, with her own child—she and Jacquet have a daughter, Gaïa, who is nine—she thinks that her father was probably reticent about his grandfather because he wanted to spare his children from being fussed over for reasons having less to do with them than with the person doing the fussing. "I wouldn't have wanted him to do it differently," she says. "It preserved a kind of innocence. It's confusing, though, to unravel what the legacy really means for me, and I still haven't quite figured it out."

In 1987, when Sophie was in her early twenties, having attended a year of art school in Boston, then worked for a year with her father on his projects, she decided to move to France, because "it seemed like the door to the world." After staying for a while with her grandmother, she went to Paris with the intention of enrolling at the École des Beaux-Arts, where Matisse had studied. As a child, she had made trips to France with her mother and father, but she didn't speak French. The French museum officials she met at her grandmother's would ask her questions, and when she couldn't reply they would make those clucking sounds the French make and say, "*C'est incroyable*," which embarrassed her. She learned enough French to present a portfolio to the admissions committee at the École des Beaux-Arts, and, with the intervention of an aunt who knew which professor would be receptive to the figurative work she was doing, she was accepted.

She discovered immediately that she couldn't draw very well. In high school, she had avoided drawing classes because she felt that a Matisse ought to know how to draw without needing help. She had always been accomplished at making copies of drawings and photographs, and she thought that was all there was to the matter. In Paris, she learned that drawing from the figure required entirely different skills. She worked hard, though, and eventually became adept. Meanwhile, she lived a life apart from the French students. "I was this lost, naïve person with this famous name, and people projecting onto me all sorts of things," she says. "Much of it was anger, not only because I had a name they would have killed to have but also because there was a kind of indignity involved in the way I appeared to uphold it. I was an American, and I didn't speak French, and I couldn't draw for beans, and I'd wear skirts that looked like they were made from burlap, and I had holes in my pants, and in the soles of my shoes. I looked like the refugee I in some senses was. The only thing that protected me from their scorn was that I was so withdrawn. I would sit in my room and listen to music and think about things that made me feel good—my own name in a museum and my work on display, or about being glamorous, anything that took me away from where I was."

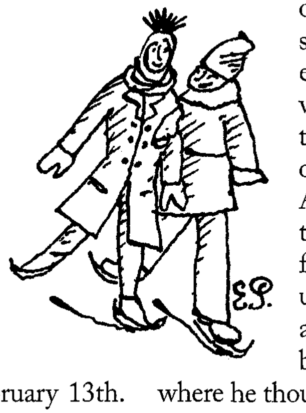
Because she didn't speak French proficiently, she didn't know for sure what the professors were saying when they evaluated her work, but she nodded and pretended to absorb every word. To earn a degree, she had to take classes in art theory and history, but she couldn't read or write French well enough (she is also seriously dyslexic). In her third year, the head of the school summoned her to his office and told her that it was unfortunate, considering her name, that she hadn't worked harder, and that the school could no longer offer her a place. All she could manage in French was to ask if there was anything she could do, and he said that there wasn't. By this time, though, she had met Jacquet and was beginning to travel among the people he knew in the Paris art world, so leaving was not an intolerable disappointment.

Sophie is the only descendant of Matisse who is a painter. His daughter tried painting but destroyed her work because she felt unable to escape her father's influence. As a student in Paris, Sophie began making paintings so modest that they hardly look like paintings. They were mostly done on the pages of her engagement calendar: color studies and abstractions and sometimes a drawing about the size of a baseball card. Because no one ever saw them, she felt free to do anything she cared to. The colors in the earliest paintings are sombre, but as the years go by they grow brighter, and more like the deep blues and reds and yellows and greens in her great-grandfather's work. In 1993, she and Jacquet had Gaïa, and Sophie stopped painting to raise her. In 1996, they moved to New York, and in 1997 she painted the Mona Lisa.

Sophie began with a literal idea: to paint Picasso's painting as Matisse might have done it. This presented her with two issues: what forms he would have used and what colors. "Guernica" depicts figures that Picasso imagined to be suffering during the bombing of the Spanish town of Guernica by the Fascists, with the help of the Nazis, in 1937, during the Spanish Civil War. From left to right, these figures include a woman on her knees who is weeping and holding in her arms a child who appears to be dead. Behind her is a bull with an impassive expression, which some critics say represents the bestial nature of the Fascists and some people say represents Spain. Picasso said it was a bull. Above the shoulder of the bull is a bird, and below the bird is a fallen soldier. Above and to the right of the soldier, more or less in the painting's center, is a horse with a deep wound in its side. Above the horse a light bulb hangs from a reflecting shade. Approaching the horse is a woman staggering in shock, and above her another woman leans from a window and holds a lamp to see what the terrible commotion is about. At the extreme right is a woman who seems to be falling through the air. In the background are buildings in flame, so the setting seems to be outdoors, but the electric light also suggests a room. It is a painting of horror and anguish, and Picasso intended that it shame the Fascists for the massacre.

Sophie began work on studies of the painting on September 15th. She made photocopies of a reproduction of "Guernica" from a book Naumann gave her, and began coloring them with gouache, a delicate paint that has a texture like fine cloth. In the first ones, the shapes were mostly black, and these were followed by ones in dark blues and blacks and reds. A few are all reds and greens; one is of nearly fluorescent yellows and greens, and one is a broad arrangement of blues and reds and greens and violet, and doesn't really work.

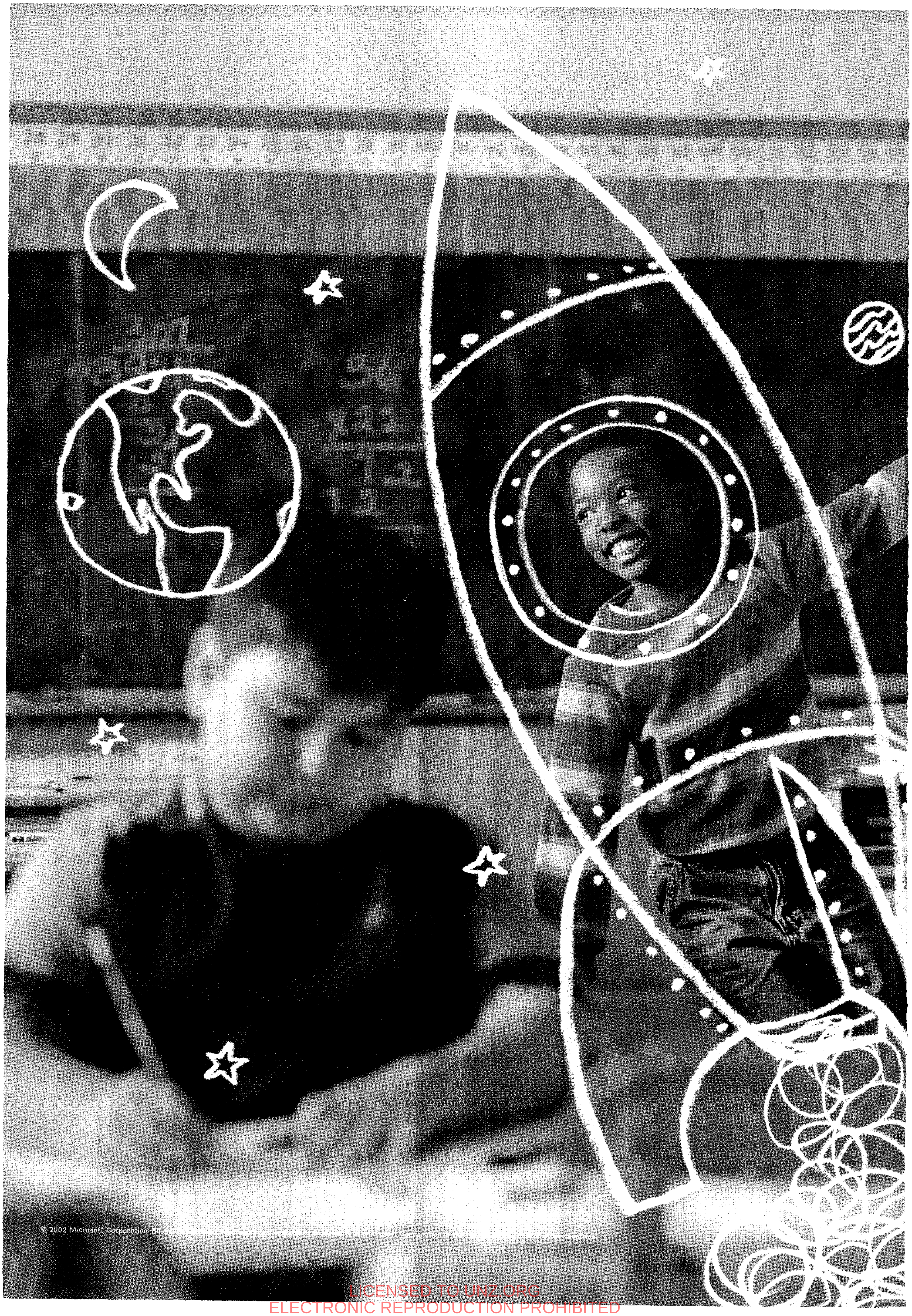
As soon as Sophie finished one study, she began another. Some were done quickly and some deliberately. After she had made about a dozen small studies, she began using larger sheets of heavy paper, and then she made two versions of the painting on canvas that are about six feet long and three feet high. None of the studies were definitive in the sense that she felt she had managed a version of the colors that she would want to make on a larger scale, but several had elements that she liked. She worked on the color studies and on drawings and on the paintings for three months, which put her up against a deadline to finish the painting in time for the opening at Naumann's gallery, on February 13th.



No matter how hard she tried to interpret Picasso's figures in drawings, she felt unable to find satisfactory equivalents in Matisse's work. Finally, she made a large drawing in pencil using only figures derived from looking at Matisse. The woman with the dead child on the left-hand border became a Madonna-like figure looking down at her child. The woman with the lamp appeared slightly annoyed at having been disturbed, and the projection of her face forward into the drawing made her look like an ornament on the hood of a fancy car. Sophie could find no counterpart in Matisse's work for the falling woman, and mostly she is smudged out, as if she were a ghost. The most compelling figure is the horse. Sophie drew it somewhat naturalistically, coiled in pain and shock, and it is somehow collapsed and transcendent at the same time. It looks more like a figure from mythology than like a horse on a battlefield. After she completed the drawing, it occurred to her that Matisse had never drawn such figures, or depicted such emotions, partly because he believed that art should be restful. (He once said, "I believe my role is to provide calm. Because I myself have need of peace.") She realized that it was not possible to compel such figures into being, and so she decided that she should reproduce Picasso's—that they were simply too formidable to alter.

None of these resolves conformed to Naumann's idea for the painting. "My instinct was to do what a comedian would do, where he assimilates the voice and appearance of someone more famous than he is," he says. When Naumann went to Sophie's studio in December, he saw, among the studies, one in which she had used découpage—cutouts—as Matisse often did. The tail on the bull was a seaweedy species of Matisse imagery, and above the woman with the lamp were scatterings of leaves like the ones he sometimes used. As Naumann looked at the study, he found that, for the most part, he was unable to tell where one artist left off and the other began. There were places where he thought Sophie had been too faithful to Picasso, and he made some drawings of his own to show her how to make the figures closer to what he imagined Matisse would have done.

Over the next few days, though, Sophie lost her enthusiasm for the idea. "I thought it would be interesting to have a painting where you would think, Matisse/Picasso, Matisse/Picasso," she



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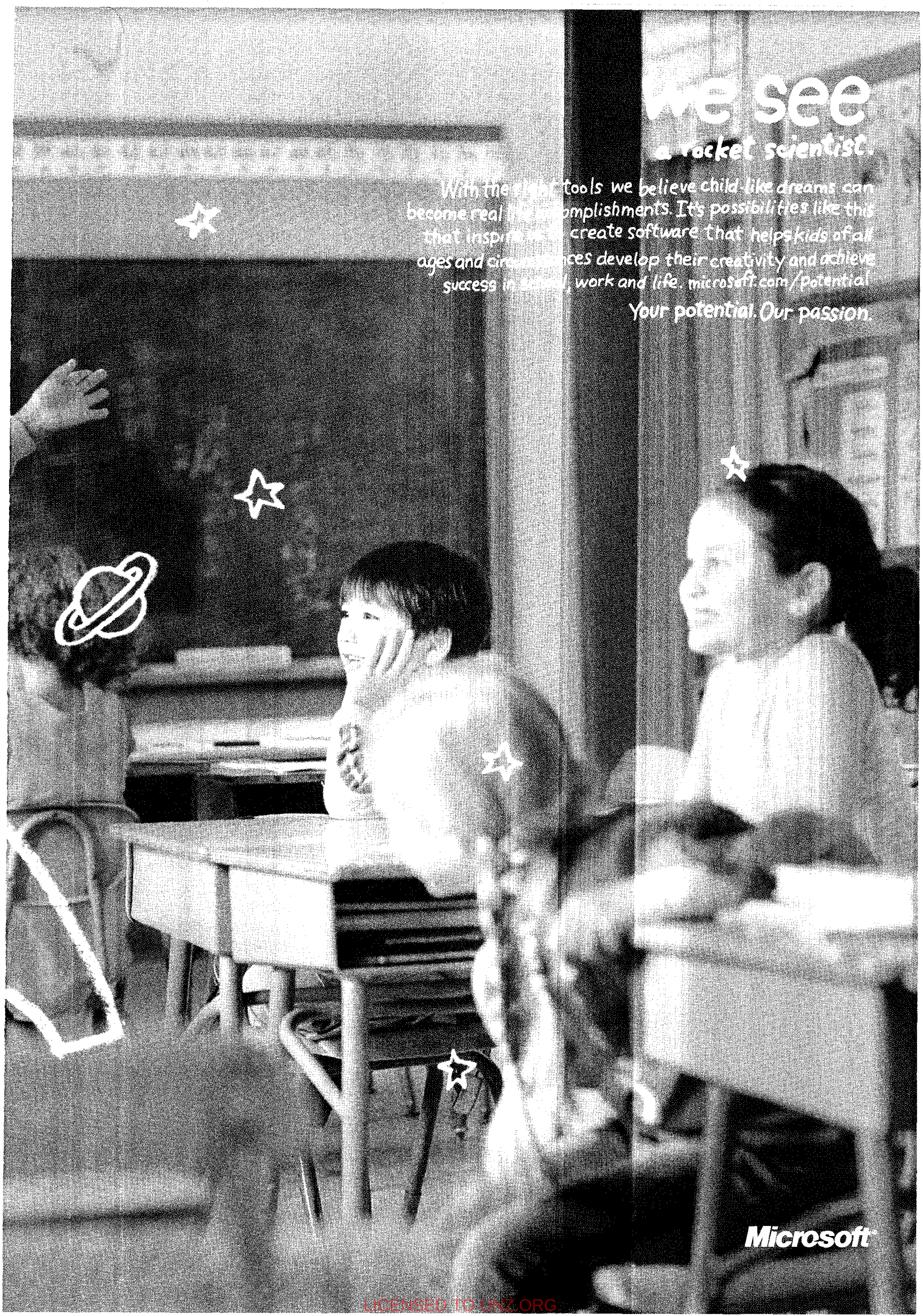
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With the right tools we believe child-like dreams can become real life accomplishments. It's possibilities like this that inspire us to create software that helps kids of all ages and circumstances develop their creativity and achieve success in school, work and life. microsoft.com/potential says, "like those drawings where you look at a vase and see two faces in profile, but when I tried to bring it off it turned into an exercise." She decided that what she really wanted to do was to make the Matisse part of the project hers and her sense of color, and not her great-grandfather and his.

Naumann told Sophie that she should paint the painting any way she wanted to and that he had only tried to help because he thought she was stalled. "The truth, however, is that I saw it as a defeat," he says, "even though really it's kind of a victory. The statement that these two artists are stylistically incompatible is a more interesting one to make. A comedian can stand up and pretend to be Burt Lancaster, but we know that Matisse and Picasso are extremely different and difficult personalities that in this case refuse to intertwine. If you can still make it work, though, you win. What's winning? If I can stand in front of the painting and see Matisse and Picasso at the same time."

Growing impatient to paint, Sophie gave up working on the studies just before Christmas. She bought canvas at an art store in SoHo, stood on top of a dresser in her studio to tack it up on the wall, and spent two days applying two coats of gesso. Sitting on the floor, she began drawing in the lower left-hand corner and worked along the bottom to the right corner. Then, sometimes standing and sometimes kneeling, she drew from right to left across the middle of the painting. She drew the images along the top while standing on the dresser, then on a stepladder, which she found in the hallway outside her studio. By the third day, she had left a trail of pencil shavings and pencil lead across the base of the painting. She kept a large photocopy of "Guernica" on the floor beside her, or picked it up and folded it lengthwise into thirds, like a man reading a newspaper on a crowded train, so that she could concentrate on a specific section. At one point, she stood against the far wall and looked at the drawing and said, "Sometimes you get the feeling of something, and sometimes it's just a struggle, and I don't know why."

Gouache is too delicate to use on a painting that has to be rolled up to be moved, and enough oil paint to cover a canvas the size of "Guernica" would cost thousands of dollars, so Sophie decided to use acrylic paints, which are mixed from pigments, and which she had never used before. First, she applied black in the areas where Picasso had used black. Then she mixed a bright yellow. She held the photocopy in one hand and a brush in the other. She leaned forward, put the brush to the canvas, stopped, looked at the study, then slowly moved the brush forward again. "This is the most nerve-racking time," she said. "Getting started. There can be disappointments."

"Should we have dinner now, or are you watching in real time?"

She painted the horse first, using green, blue, orange, red, and purple, applying paint that had a texture like honey. The colors were bright and wet in the light, but they dried hard and flat, especially the reds and blues. As the days passed, she applied layers of color over them in slightly different shades, and the reds got warmer, and the blues went from looking like paint on a wall to being like water you were staring into. The horse proved so difficult that she stood back from it one day and said, "I'm just going to try to keep going with something else. I'll come back to that later." She turned to the figure of the falling woman. One day, the phone rang and she told the caller, "I just put the color up on a wall next to the falling woman. We're looking kind of heavy and flat and uninteresting, but it'll be fine. It'll be just fine."

One of the last figures she handled was the staggering woman. The woman has a shawl on her back, and when Sophie painted the shawl a deep red and gave it a border of black wavy lines it turned out to be the single detail in the entire painting that could have come from either Picasso or Matisse.

As Sophie painted, she was aware of the vibrant and, for her, nearly illicit quality of Picasso's brawny line. She was also apprehensive about whether Naumann would like the finished painting. (He saw it on January 13th and liked it enormously.) Or whether anyone among her family or friends would say, as some of them did after her first show, "It's wonderful, Sophie, but when are you going to do your own work?"—not understanding that her depiction of a signature painting by the painter most different from her ancestor was a means, however indirect, of gaining the ground she needed to work entirely from her own imagery. In addition, there was the practical matter of learning to use the new paints to best advantage. During the first week in January, she ran out of the medium the pigments are mixed in, and had to go back to the store, Guerra Paint & Pigment, in the East Village, where she had bought them. She had been taken there by a friend from the École des Beaux-Arts who lives in California and paints murals for rich people. The friend was visiting the city over Christmas. Sophie had told her that she didn't know what paints would give her the lush texture that gouaches provide, and her friend had said that acrylics would, and that she knew where to get the best ones, assuming that the store, which she hadn't been to for years, still existed.

It was cold the day Sophie went back to the paint store, and she wore a big warm coat and one of those Asian wool hats that have flaps that come down over the ears and strings of yarn to tie them under the chin. Guerra Paint & Pigment occupies a small storefront on East Thirteenth Street. There is a counter facing the door and some shelves behind it with plastic bottles of pigments. Along the walls on either side of the counter and up to the ceiling are little swatches of paint colors that look very much like the newsprint on the horse in "Guernica." When Sophie came through the door, the owners, a young man and woman, recognized her as the cheerful and charming woman who had asked a lot of questions and bought lots of pigments and not enough medium even though they told her she needed more, so they were not surprised to see her again. She told them that she loved the paints, and asked how to mix this or that color so that it would be more glossy or less glossy and how to thin the medium and so on. She handed over her credit card. The woman said, "Ah, a Matisse. You must be a great painter." And for a moment Sophie's face looked uncertain and childlike, as if someone had said something thoughtless to her. She said simply, "I hope so." ♦

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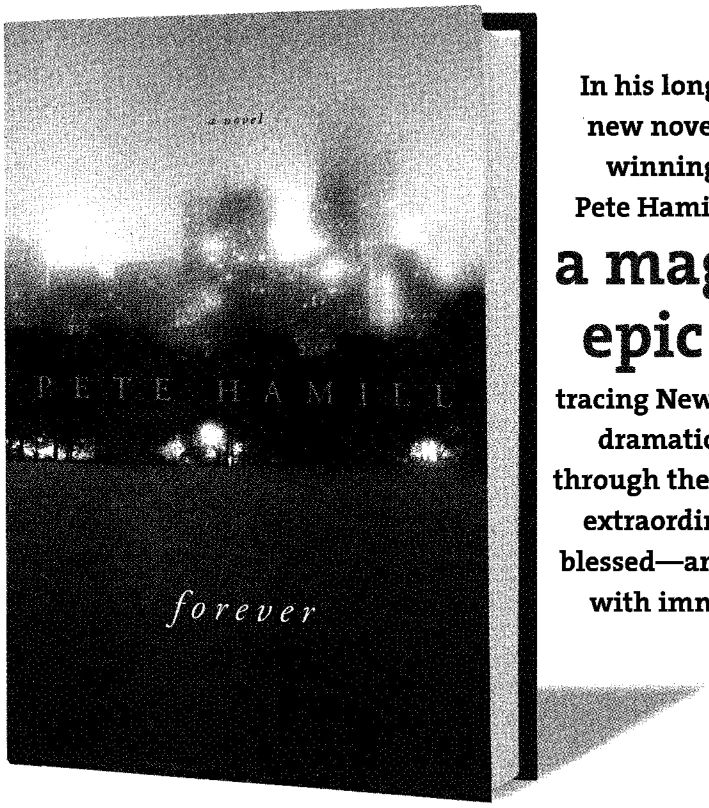

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE VACCINE

Has the race to save Africa from AIDS put Western science at odds with Western ethics?

BY MICHAEL SPECTER

At forty-one, Hala has five children and eight grandchildren. Her first husband left when their second child was born. Her second husband died of AIDS nearly twenty years ago, in the earliest days of the epidemic. Hala often tells people that she sells charcoal, doughnuts, or cooking oil on the streets, but that isn't true. She is a prostitute, who has spent nearly half her life working out of a wattle hut in Pumwani, one of Nairobi's most crowded—and violent—slums. On an average day, she might see ten men, most of them truck drivers from Tanzania. Her "office" has just enough room for a single bed, a stool, a customer, herself, and a wicker basket filled with condoms. The basket is a recent addition; only in the past year or so have her clients agreed to use condoms with any regularity.

None of these details make Hala unusual. Despite the severity of the AIDS epidemic, Kenyans have only just begun to speak openly about the disease, and the epidemic has certainly done little to deter prostitution. As many as two and a half million people in Kenya, one in six adults, are infected with H.I.V. In Pumwani, more than ninety per cent of prostitutes—and many of their clients—test positive for the virus. Hala has engaged in unprotected sex with hundreds of H.I.V.-positive men. Her best customer—a man who visited her regularly for seventeen years, and never used a condom—recently died of AIDS. Remarkably, though, she has never become infected.

The day I was introduced to Hala, at a clinic not far from where she lives, she was draped in black robes and wore a purple shawl with gold piping down the sides. She is a handsome, businesslike woman, and she is completely baffled by her fate. "I have no idea why I of all people have been spared," she told me. "But if my luck can be useful to the doctors then I will be grateful."

Hala belongs to an increasingly famous cohort of research subjects, known by AIDS experts throughout the world as "the Nairobi prostitutes." In the late nineteen-eighties, the Canadian infectious-disease expert Francis Plummer noticed something startling: in a study of two thousand Nairobi prostitutes, as many as two hundred remained uninfected, despite years of constant high-risk behavior. Later, when Plummer and his colleagues examined the data more closely, they realized that if the prostitutes didn't become infected within five years of their first exposure to the virus, they were unlikely to become infected at all.

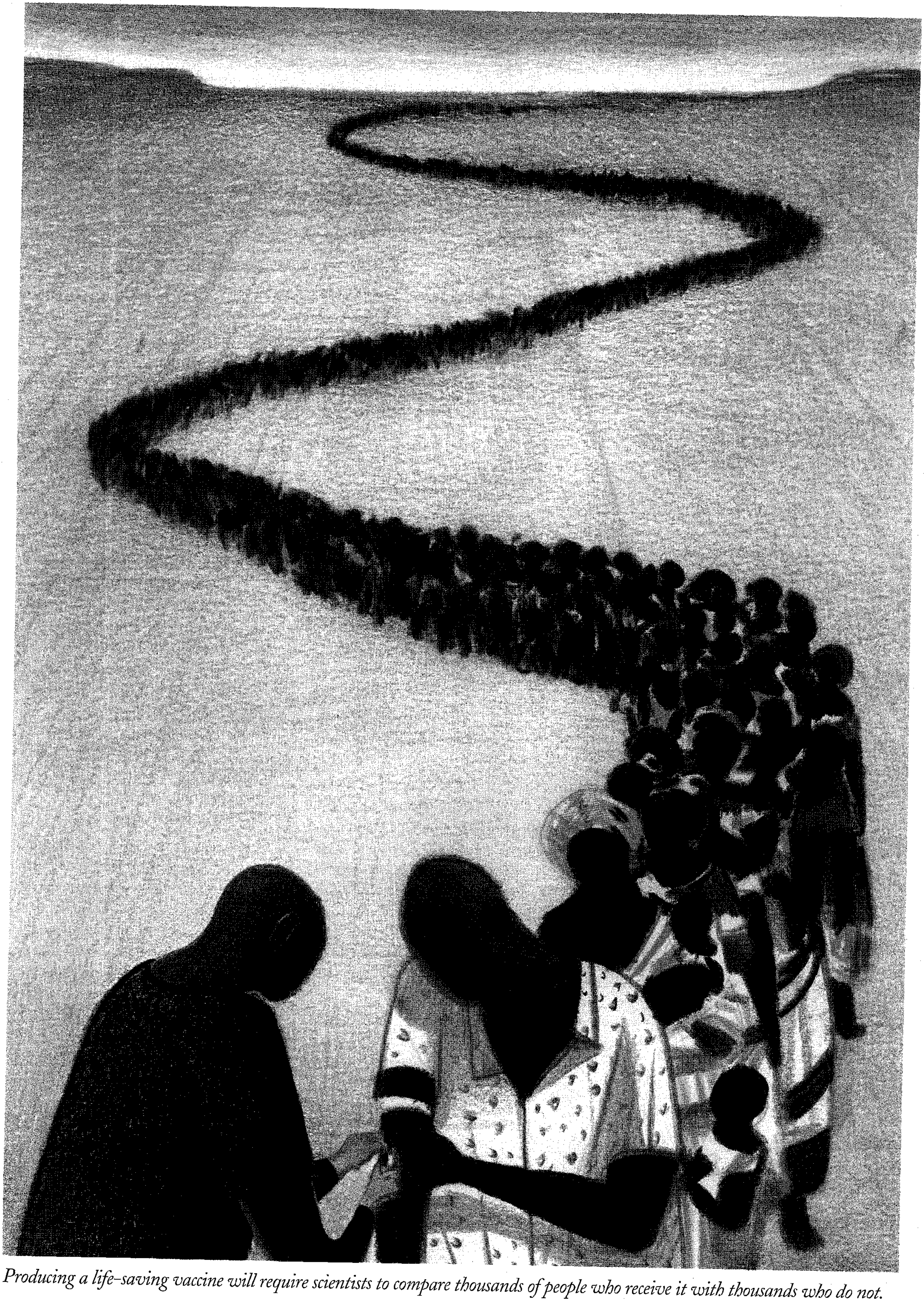
How, exactly, were these women protected when millions who engaged in the same behavior fell ill and died? It couldn't have been luck; nobody gets lucky a thousand times in a row. Nor was it good nutrition; the women often lived on plantains and rice, and many were weak, undernourished, and sickly. Plummer concluded that these women harbored a rare defensive weapon within their immune systems. To many vaccine researchers, the implications were thrilling: if they could identify that weapon and somehow bottle it, they might help to end the world's most devastating epidemic. "We all held our breath for a while," Job J. Bwayo, the director of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative in Kenya, told me when I went to see him at the University of Nairobi. "Nobody expected a simple solution to come from it, but we have all kept hoping that somehow the girls will provide the key."

The search for a solution has become desperate. Twenty-one years after the first cases of "slim disease," as AIDS was initially called in Africa, appeared in a Ugandan village on the shores of Lake Victoria, scientists are only marginally closer to producing a successful vaccine than they were when they identified the virus that causes it. A great deal has changed for people with AIDS in those two decades: medicines are now routinely available throughout the developed world. But, of the forty million people who are living with H.I.V., less than five per cent have access to them. Because that percentage will not change dramatically in the next decade, the world has never needed a medical intervention more urgently than it needs an AIDS vaccine today.

Thanks in part to a United Nations special session devoted to AIDS, the plight of Africa has finally gained at least a measure of attention. Last fall, I watched at a clinic in Nairobi as a farmworker received a new kind of H.I.V. test, one that provides almost instant results. A nurse took a few drops of his blood, the man sat quietly on a bench for half an hour, and then he had his answer. Even a year ago, this man, and tens of thousands like him, would have had to make a second journey to the clinic—often on foot—to get the test results; many would not have been able, or willing, to do that. While I was in Nairobi, I attended a support group for infected mothers, visited well-maintained clinics in the most fetid slums, and was surprised to see billboards on the main highway urging precautions. After years of denial, even politicians acknowledge that AIDS poses a serious threat to the future of the nation. In Uganda, where President Yoweri Museveni long ago established himself as the African leader most willing to speak openly about the disease, the epidemic has ebbed. In each of the past ten years, there have been fewer new H.I.V. infections than in the year before, a feat managed by no other African country. Although six per cent of the adults in Uganda remain infected—a toll that would be horrifying almost anywhere else on earth—the figure a decade ago was more than twenty per cent.

Still, the news in Africa can only be described as profoundly distressing. The life expectancy of sexually active Ugandans has fallen from sixty-four years before the epidemic to forty-two today. In Kenya, the decline has been from sixty-six

LORENZO MATTOTTI



Producing a life-saving vaccine will require scientists to compare thousands of people who receive it with thousands who do not.

"On balance, Estelle, your party was not helpful."

years to forty-eight in the past ten years alone, and life expectancy continues to drop. Studies by the United Nations show that H.I.V. not only is contributing to the famine in southern Africa but may be a cause of it. Seven million farmworkers have died from the disease in Africa since 1985; sixteen million more are likely to die by 2020 if prevention programs aren't improved. Agricultural productivity has plummeted, even as the nutritional needs of the sick have become greater than ever. To date, sixty-five million people around the world have become infected with H.I.V., most of them in Africa. Twenty-five million have died. In the next twenty years—as the epidemic moves swiftly through India, Russia, and China—the number could more than double. There are no scenarios for any kind of war which project the type of complete destruction, the numbers of dead, or the social collapse that can already be attributed to AIDS. The disease represents the worst disaster that we can reasonably expect to befall humanity in our lifetime.

That is why Hala and the other women of Pumwani are essential. "You do the research where the problem is," Kevin De Cock, the chief representative in Kenya for the Centers for Disease Control, told me. "Africa needs the answer, the world needs the answer. But you are not going to solve the AIDS crisis in a convent in Montana." To gauge the effectiveness of an AIDS vaccine, scientists will need to compare thousands of people who receive it with thousands who do not. That will never happen in the United States or Europe—regions where less than one per cent of the population is infected, and where most patients have access to effective treatments. Only extensive human trials among groups with high infection rates will produce a vaccine. In practice, this means that tens of thousands of Africans and Asians from remote villages and overcrowded cities will have to be recruited for tests on a scale never seen before.

The scientific challenges presented by the epidemic have proved to be humbling: in laboratories across the world, researchers have thrown everything they have at H.I.V., but nearly every time they manage to move one step forward, the virus seems to move two. As great as the scientific and logistical hurdles are, however, the ethical problems associated with long-term vaccine trials in the developing world—funded by Western donors and designed, largely, by Western scientists—may be tougher still. In 1796, after Edward Jenner noticed that dairymaids seemed immune to smallpox, he simply inoculated a healthy young boy with cowpox, and then, a few weeks later, exposed him to the human disease, at great risk to the child. No scientist could do such a thing today. There are rules that prohibit researchers from gambling with the lives of their subjects: they have to minimize the risks, obtain consent, and provide the volunteers with "appropriate treatment." But what, exactly, constitutes appropriate treatment? In America or Europe, such a trial would have to include the requirement that every infected participant receive the best care available today—a lifetime commitment to expensive antiretroviral medicine. Should such a promise be made to Africans? Is appropriate treatment for a community in northern Uganda the same as it would be in Manhattan?

The issue of whether Western ethics and the rules of medical care which accompany them should prevail in Africa has for many people become the central debate of the AIDS epidemic. Several prominent American physicians, led by Marcia Angell, who teaches at Harvard and is a former editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, have argued that medical ethics has no borders: what is morally right in America is morally right in Africa, too. They believe that international rules of medical experimentation require that volunteers in such trials receive the best treatment available, not simply the level of care typical of an impoverished community.

No country in Africa, and few countries elsewhere in the developing world, can afford Western levels of treatment. So the principal question for researchers and public-health officials is both simple and harsh: Will scientific objectives drive the search for an AIDS vaccine, or will a series of ethical imperatives imposed by the West take precedence? Because that question has gone unanswered, fear of exploitation and abuse hangs over the trials, threatening not only to impede their progress but to prevent them altogether.

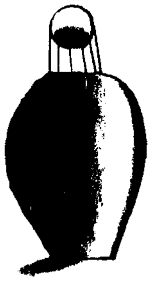
Issues of equity in clinical research preoccupy Western ethicists and public-health officials. Will people used as subjects benefit from the research? (Africans served as essential participants in trials for the principal vaccine now used against hepatitis B; yet when the vaccine finally arrived they could not afford it.) Should volunteers get better medical care than other people in their villages? Should they get better treatment than other members of their own families? Are we exploiting research subjects if we don't promise special treatment? Are we bribing them if we do?

"I am very worried about these trials," Peter Lurie, the deputy director of Public Citizen's Health Research Group, told me when we met one rainy day in the organization's offices, just off Dupont Circle, in Washington, D.C. Lurie and his colleague Sidney Wolfe have long been concerned about what they regard as the cavalier attitude of American researchers toward Third World subjects. "Instead of seeing themselves as activists for better care in Africa, scientists will use the poor quality of care to justify what they want to do anyway," Lurie said. "But you are not permitted simply to use subjects in order to collect data because it is useful to you. That is exploitation and abuse. That is what Tuskegee was." In the Tuskegee experiment, which ran from 1932 until 1972, researchers allowed poor black men with syphilis to go untreated, in order to study the long-term effects of the disease; it remains America's signature instance of research undisciplined by ethical oversight. Lurie fears that, in the name of science, doctors could again withhold treatments that they know will work. "If we aren't careful," Lurie said, "we could be in for the greatest injustice in the history of medicine."

The Windsor hotel, just a few miles from the center of Entebbe, has a commanding view of Lake Victoria. It sits at the end of a rutted dirt road crowded with men selling tomatoes and fresh Nile perch, not far from the Uganda Virus Research Institute. U.V.R.I. scientists have led investigations into many of the continent's infectious scourges, including polio, measles, yellow fever, and West Nile fever (which was initially isolated and identified in 1937 from the blood of a febrile Ugandan woman). Uganda was the first country to be visibly decimated by the AIDS epidemic, and, since the mid-eighties, the institute's researchers have worked almost exclusively on H.I.V.

Nearly every significant global health organization—among them, the United States' Centers for Disease Control and Britain's Medical Research Council—has been allotted workspace at the institute. Its extensive studies—from natural history to molecular biology—have turned Uganda into one of the world's most informative scientific field projects. Among those groups, though, none play a more significant role than the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative.

I went to the Windsor late one afternoon at the urging of Pontiano Kaleebu, a virologist who is the Vaccine Initiative's principal investigator in Uganda. The group's community advisory board was planning its first serious discussion of the Phase III trials that the I.A.V.I. hopes to conduct in Uganda. Once vaccines have shown promise in the laboratory and in animals, they are generally tested on humans in three stages. In the first phase, a few people are given the vaccine, simply to insure that it causes no serious side effects. Next, scientists try to find out whether the vaccine can stimulate people's immune systems. The final phase, and the one that matters most, requires thousands of volunteers (and several years) in order to provide reliable statistical evidence of whether a vaccine actually prevents disease. The vaccine for which Kaleebu was trying to recruit volunteers had been developed by Andrew McMichael, Tomás Hanke, and their collaborators at Oxford, based in part on immunological information gleaned from the blood cells of the Nairobi prostitutes. It is one of dozens of vaccines currently under development (and among several that the I.A.V.I. is supporting), but it has shown particular promise. The plan is to expand that trial to include thousands of people in at least three African countries. But first Kaleebu and his colleagues would have to convince a group of Ugandan civic leaders—educators, newspaper editors, and clergy among them—that the people of their country should once again subject themselves to the inconvenience and uncertainty involved in testing a vaccine.



It was the beginning of the monsoon season, and the intense daily rain had just ended as the members of the advisory board arrived at the hotel. The scent of jasmine filled the air, and a family of monkeys played on the lawns. It is never easy to persuade people to submit to medical experiments, even in a country like Uganda—which is both enlightened about AIDS and has nearly been destroyed by it. People are instinctively wary of offering their bodies for research. Meetings like this, where risks and benefits are explained, are essential if any drug or vaccine is to succeed.

Kaleebu had confided to me that he was nervous about the meeting, because without the support of community leaders a vaccine trial could never be completed. "We have asked the people of this country to be guinea pigs before, and they have responded admirably," he told me. "But we have not been able to come back and say, 'Here is your reward.' I worry about how many times we can ask for the sacrifice. But, of course, I worry far more about what we would do if people gave up and said, 'No, go away.' "

The group gathered in a large, muggy conference room on the second floor. Fred Nakwagala, a young medical officer for the I.A.V.I. program, explained how the vaccine works. He is a thin, unprepossessing man, and at first he spoke too softly to be heard. "We need to create a world without AIDS," he said. "In order to do that, we need a safe, effective, and affordable vaccine. This is up to you. No one else can do it." Sweat poured from his brow as he began explaining, in the simplest possible terms, that a vaccine is a scientific product that prepares your body to fight infection.

Father Christopher Kiwanuka, the leader of an Entebbe Catholic parish, asked if a vaccine was really the only thing that could eliminate the threat of

H.I.V. "There are drugs now," he said. "They are getting cheaper. Won't they eventually be here, too?"

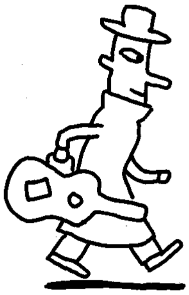
Antiretroviral therapies, which stop H.I.V. from replicating, are already available to Ugandans rich enough to pay for them. When the drugs are purchased by agencies like Doctors Without Borders, they cost no more than three hundred dollars a year, less than a dollar per day. That doesn't seem like much, but, as it happens, it is Uganda's annual per-capita income. The government spends an average of about six dollars a year on health care for each of its citizens; a dollar a day might as well be a thousand. Nakwagala explained that, even with falling prices, antiretroviral therapies will never resolve Uganda's AIDS crisis. "Neither will prevention," he continued. "Prevention has had limited success. Education and condoms work only up to a point. We have one million people in our country currently infected. Half a million are dead. I wish I could offer you different news, but we have run out of things we can try."

Silence filled the room. The people on the advisory board were polite, informed, and supportive. But they were also unhappy with the lack of medical progress. AIDS is the first disease of globalization. No other infectious epidemic has attacked both the richest and the poorest parts of the world at the same time. These people read newspapers and watch television; many of them travel. They know what the citizens of their country are missing. Uganda has often been presented as a model to the world because it has "turned around its epidemic." But one reason death rates have fallen is that so many people have already died. And, with a million residents infected, the risk to the population remains grave.

One member of the board asked whether the vaccine could cause the disease, since many vaccines are made from weakened versions of the virus they are designed to provide immunity against. "Just as a tomato cannot cause AIDS," Nakwagala told the group, "this vaccine cannot cause AIDS." The analogy produced puzzled looks around the room. "This vaccine also cannot cure AIDS—we won't be able to tell for years if it works."

"But why us?" a prominent journalist asked. "It seems it's always us. For how many years does Uganda have to be the test case?" There were murmurs of agreement.

It is an awkward fact that the very countries where vaccine trials must take place are usually the poorest, and the most politically unstable. Before researchers can invest hundreds of millions of dollars in a scientific study, they need some assurance that the government will allow it to run for years. In Africa, that is asking a lot. Earlier that day, Kaleebu told me that he had made plans to attend an AIDS conference in the Ivory Coast later that week. But, he said, as if he were passing along an unpleasant weather report, "I had to cancel because of the coup."



Nakwagala spoke frankly to the advisory board: "There are no answers right now. Only questions. There will be none tomorrow, either. But if we ever want anything to change we have to do this." After an hour, tea was served, everyone agreed that there was no real choice except to go forward, and the meeting came to an uneasy end.

The campus of the Uganda Virus Research Institute is spread across a few dozen acres, and most of the offices are housed in airy little bungalows that face Lake Victoria. After the meeting, I followed Kaleebu back to his office there. Kaleebu is an urbane and reflective man with a sad smile; a thin oval of hair surrounds his mouth. He was brought up in Kampala and finished his medical studies at Makerere University, in 1986. He then moved to London, where he earned a Ph.D. Since returning to Uganda, he has been in charge of the U.V.R.I.'s immunology division. "I am worried that the question of how to do the trials, and whether they can be done fairly and ethically, will overshadow the science itself," he said, in a soft British accent. "There is an endless amount of talk—in the West, not here—about what kind of treatment all the volunteers should receive and whether it's fair to use them. I know people in America think this discussion is for our benefit, but they are wrong. I am Ugandan and, believe me, I have no stake in taking advantage of anyone in this country for my research. We will give people the best care they can get, the best care we can afford. That is fair. If we could distribute antiretroviral drugs, I would be thrilled. But I don't see how, and I don't see when. And the debate is a bit patronizing. We are not blind here. This is not an issue of individual rights—as American ethicists would like it to be. It is the opposite: a public-health emergency."

Kaleebu is married and has four young children. He lives near the institute so that he can walk to work. He stays at the lab until dinner, spends an hour with his family, and then returns until ten. "That's my life," he said with a shrug. "And it will be my life as long as AIDS is with us."

Earlier in the day, I had seen a heavyset man leaving his office in tears. Kaleebu has a gentle demeanor. He did not appear to be the type to make a man cry. "What happened?" I asked.

"That was a man I have known for many years," he told me. "He came here today and showed me the drugs he was prescribed and the amount he had to pay for them. I didn't know he had AIDS. He can't afford the drugs, and he asked if there were cheaper alternatives. I told him there were not." The sun was setting on the lake, and Kaleebu's eyes glistened in the fading light. "This is a person from my life. I was surprised to see him sick, and I look at him and it's frustrating, because what is his future? He will die without drugs, and I can do nothing for him. I had to let him leave my office with no hope. I am a doctor, and it is humiliating to tell people we can't do well enough for you."

He sighed and waved sadly at the darkening lake behind him. "There was AIDS here before my wife and I had children. I see my daughters and sons growing up, and not long ago I realized—really, I guess, admitted to myself—that they are going to have the same problem. I never thought that would be true. AIDS will be in all their futures. I have come to realize that now. And it frightens me."

The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative has its main offices in Manhattan, high above the financial district. With money from a coalition of public and private donors—not least the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which has made the discovery and distribution of an AIDS vaccine its most significant project—the initiative acts both as a medical gateway and as a sort of philanthropic venture-capital firm dedicated to funding the effort to find a vaccine.

I went there one morning to talk with Seth Berkley, the man who runs the initiative. Berkley is a rangy forty-six-year-old physician who was trained at Brown and at Harvard, and worked as an epidemiologist in Brazil and Uganda during the nineteen-eighties. He was in Africa just at the time that the full horror of AIDS became clear. When I saw Berkley, he was walking with a severe limp, the result of an accident last year in the Fish River Canyon, in southern Namibia. Since he was the only doctor on the trip, he was forced to set his own badly fractured leg and then wait for a day until a helicopter could lift him out of the gorge.

I asked Berkley whether he thought the search for a vaccine was at last fully under way. His office has a spectacular view of the city, and its one free wall is covered with a giant map of the world. "You have to ask yourself what on earth the people on this planet are doing," he replied, in a typical burst of unhinged honesty. He limped over to the map. "If you stand back and think about what the world will look like a hundred years from now, and you look at even the most conservative numbers, you will see that in the end only a vaccine will matter. Nothing else. The projections are that bad—in Africa, India, China, Russia—yet the world has just not gotten serious enough. Even now, we are still fooling around on the edges."

Berkley is often criticized for his single-minded pursuit of this goal. But his assertions are hard to dismiss; in 2001, less than two per cent of the twenty billion dollars spent on AIDS prevention, treatment, and research across the world was devoted to the search for a vaccine. After millions of deaths, only a single vaccine has made it into the late stages of human trials.

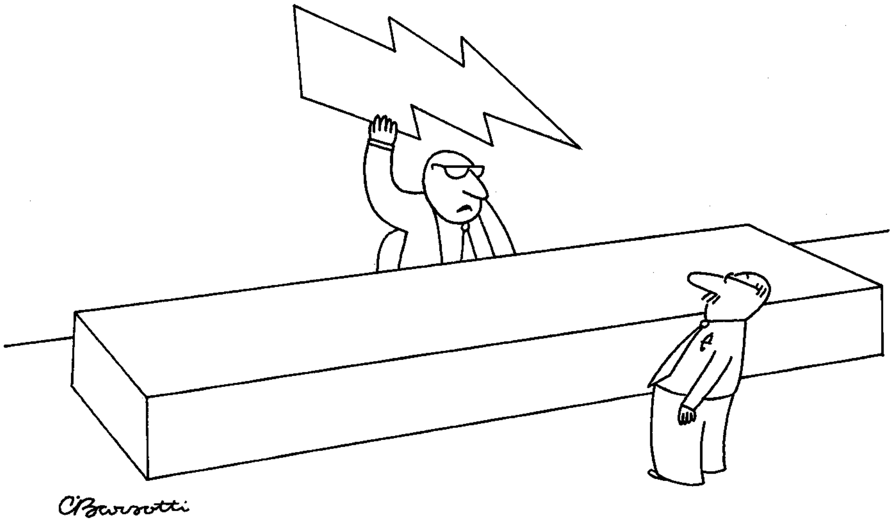
The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative exists for a strange reason: an AIDS vaccine may be a global necessity, but it is really in no single country's or company's interest to spend the sort of money that would be necessary to find one. Most pharmaceutical firms view any such vaccine as a liability nightmare; and the demand would be greatest among the populations that are least able to pay. Making drugs, by contrast, involves a much greater financial incentive and much lower risk. "We have left vaccine development to the commercial sector as if there were an incentive for companies in the marketplace to make a product," Larry Corey, the head of the H.I.V. Vaccine Trials Network and a professor of medicine at the University of Washington, told me. "But there is no incentive. And what is society's response? Well, society can't get it together. Remember, these trials can cost hundreds of millions of dollars. Do we use public-private partnerships? Does the government fund it all? We are just asking all these questions today. Twenty years after the epidemic began."

Much has been written about whether governments have spent enough money developing an AIDS vaccine—whether there should have been a sort of viral Manhattan Project—and whether existing resources have been used wisely. It is a difficult matter to resolve. There is no question that more money, particularly in the early years, would have helped push research forward. But scientific discovery isn't linear; it moves in unpredictable patterns. Billions of dollars have been spent on the war on cancer in the past thirty years, and, many would argue, to little avail.

One reason progress toward an AIDS vaccine has been limited is that we live in a time of scientific transition; our growing knowledge of molecular genetics has put biologists in a scientific netherworld. In the past, vaccine programs were run by empiricists, who relied on scientific intuition and common sense. Often, they tried compounds without knowing in detail how they worked; like Jenner's smallpox vaccine, either the shots prevented an infection or they didn't. We still do not fully understand, for example, why the pertussis vaccine offers protection. But biology is now driven by genomics, not by trial and error. Researchers seek, above all, to understand the functions of the specific proteins and genes that form a sophisticated and mutable virus like H.I.V., and then to concoct clever ways of preventing those genes from doing their job.

"We all want to move in medicine from empiricism, where we have been, to design," says Richard Klausner, who is a former director of the National Cancer Institute and is now at the Gates Foundation, which has increasingly become a sort of shadow National Institutes of Health. "Design makes sense. It would be more effective, less toxic, more efficient. There is no question it's a better alternative. It turns out, however, that we are not quite ready for it. Our desire is far beyond our ability to apply the knowledge we have. It all sounds great, but we don't have a model for this disease. We don't even know what it takes to create a successful AIDS vaccine."

From the start of the epidemic, researchers, instead of trying every vaccine that might conceivably work, turned the principal responsibility over to molecular biologists—who sought to reduce the AIDS virus to its smallest genetic



"The board of directors has given me new powers."

components. "It cost us at least a decade," Berkley told me. Then, as more people in the United States and Europe became ill, advocacy groups began to clamor for governments to emphasize treatment, and they were successful. The vaccine effort suffered considerably.

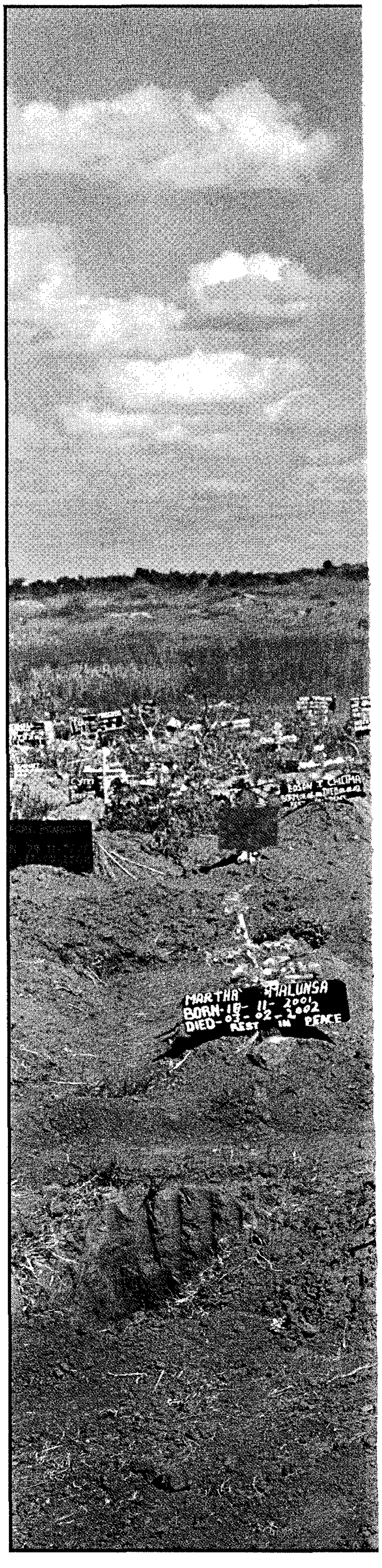
Since 1984, when H.I.V. was first identified as the cause of AIDS, there have been occasional pronouncements that a vaccine would soon become available. The first, and most ridiculed, of these claims was made by Margaret M. Heckler, who was then the Secretary of Health and Human Services. During a press conference at which she announced the discovery of the virus, she confidently predicted that there would be an effective vaccine within two years. In May, 1997, after thirteen years and thousands of disappointing experiments, President Bill Clinton, in a conscious echo of John F. Kennedy's electrifying 1962 promise to put a man on the moon, set a new national goal for science. In a speech delivered at Morgan State University, Clinton said, "Today let us commit ourselves to developing an AIDS vaccine within the next decade."

It is already clear that his goal will not be met. The vaccine that is furthest along is made by a company called VaxGen, based in California. VaxGen recently completed a study that enrolled nearly eight thousand people, including twenty-five hundred intravenous drug users in Thailand. The company's scientists are currently analyzing the data. The vaccine is a genetically souped-up version of a single protein from the outer shell of the AIDS virus. Unfortunately, the shell changes so rapidly that such approaches have failed several challenges in the past; most scientists are skeptical that this vaccine will prove capable of protecting many people for very long. Don Francis, the president of the company—and among the first to warn the world about the epidemic—has said that he would be pleased if the vaccine worked a third of the time. By contrast, vaccines for measles, yellow fever, and pertussis have success rates that are greater than ninety per cent.

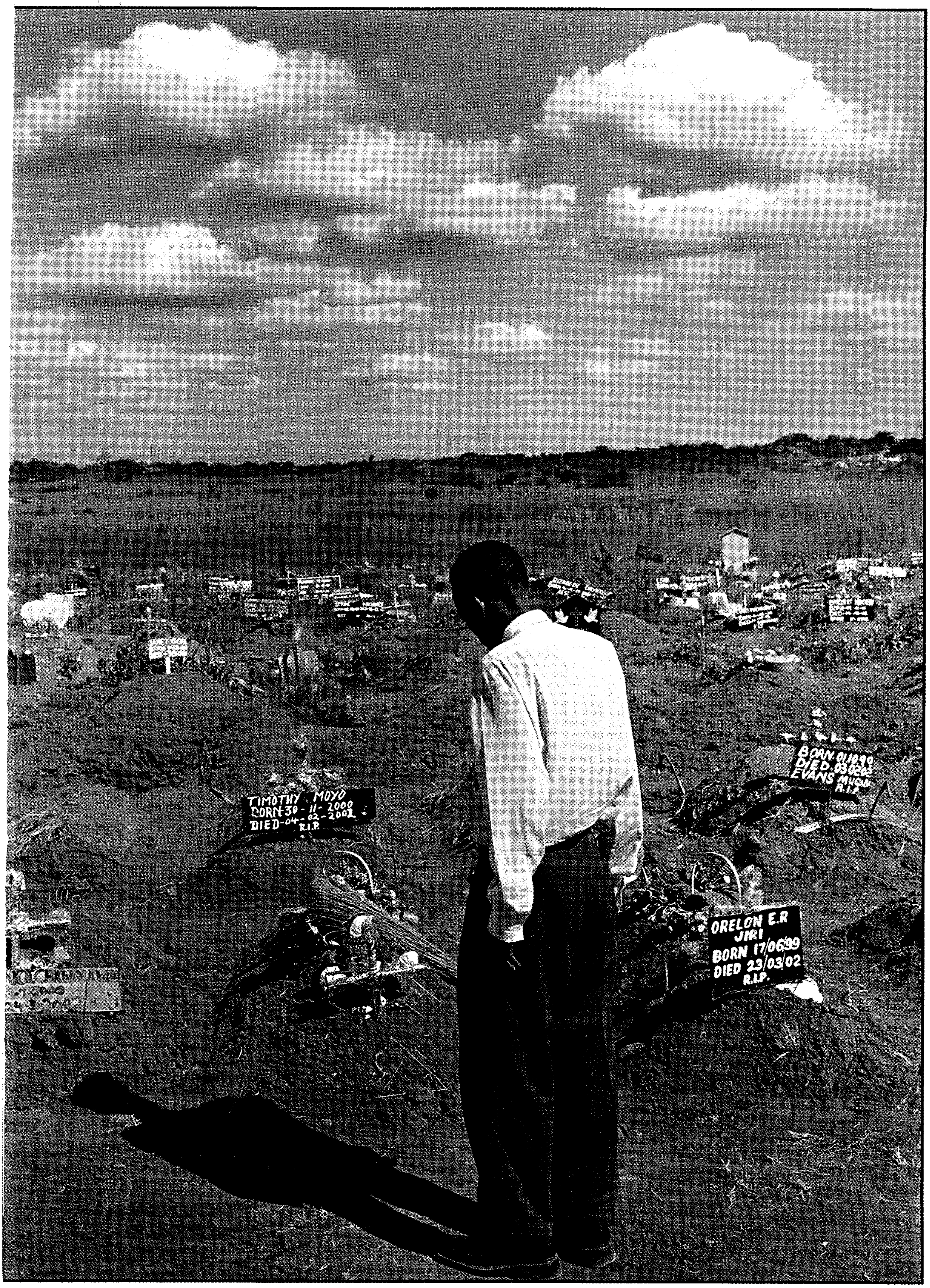
"Please don't say that I am pessimistic, because I am not," Anthony Fauci told me when I went to visit him at the N.I.H., where, as the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, he is responsible for funding much of the AIDS research in the United States. "A fully effective vaccine against H.I.V. is by no means impossible. It will eventually happen. But there are many problems we need to solve in order to produce one. The best ways to vaccinate don't work with H.I.V. We need to come up with something new."

Late last year, I went to Oxford to visit Andrew McMichael. McMichael is chief of the human-immunology group at the Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, part of Oxford University, where he is also a professor of medicine. Most scientists who study vaccines concentrate on the function of antibodies; McMichael was among the first to focus on a different phenomenon—T-cell immunity. He started with the flu virus and moved into H.I.V. research in the mid-eighties. His laboratory has designed one of the most promising AIDS vaccines currently being tested. McMichael is a shy, donnish man. He is pale and partly bald, with soft brown hair. He tends to mumble, and, as an experienced, cautious researcher, he abhors hype. He rarely discusses his vaccine work without mentioning that it might all come to nothing.

McMichael and the infectious-disease expert Sarah Rowland-Jones work with about a dozen others in a boxy glass building hidden behind the maternity ward of Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital. The research facility is laid out in identical grids on four floors. The most expensive and cumbersome equipment sits in the center of each floor, and the researchers work around it. The labs, which are only a few years old, are filled with machines for sequencing DNA and with centrifuges for analyzing blood that researchers collect from volunteers nearly every day. The place is crowded with young graduate students, and space is so scarce that some of them are forced to work in the halls. Oxford is not known for its cheery weather, but the day I was there blinding sunlight bounced off the highly polished chrome hoods and glove



An H.I.V.-positive man at the grave of his son, who died of AIDS. The epidemic has claimed some twenty million African lives. Photograph by Kristen Ashburn.


TIMOTHY MOYO
BORN 30-11-2000
DIED 04-02-2002
R.I.P.
BORN 01.10.99
DIED. 03.02.02
EVANS MUQUI
R.I.P.
ORELON E.R
JIRI
BORN 17/06/99
DIED 23/03/02
R.I.P.

CONTACT

boxes that lined the walls of the lab.

In the mid-nineteen-nineties, McMichael and Rowland-Jones began to look closely at the Nairobi prostitutes, in an attempt to see why they remain uninfected. It turned out that most of the women possessed high levels of a type of white blood cell designed specifically to kill H.I.V.-infected cells. So, with financial support from the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, they decided to make a vaccine that would trigger the same kind of response they had seen in the prostitutes.

Most vaccines train the immune system to defend itself by using a harmless piece of virus—or a clever imitation—to trick the body into thinking it has been infected. Our white blood cells create a range of weapons, but the immune system relies most heavily on two of them. The first, proteins known as antibodies, rush to attack viruses as they circulate in the bloodstream. The other kind of response involves cytotoxic T lymphocytes, better known as killer T cells, which detect infected cells and destroy them.

Vaccines are made in a couple of basic ways. Those created by killing the disease-causing germ are usually able to train blood cells to secrete the specific antibodies needed to recognize and overcome infection. Most of these vaccines produce only a weak response, however, which means they have to be given more than once. Live, attenuated vaccines are often more effective; they are composed of a virus that has been weakened or altered in order to reduce its ability to cause disease. After exposure to such a vaccine, lymphocytes called memory cells learn to fight the infection, and they normally stay in a person's immune system for the rest of his or her life. If the infection returns, the cells recognize it and can rapidly swarm the bloodstream to defeat the invader. You never even know you were exposed.

By contrast, scientists have discovered no way to eliminate H.I.V. once it infects a cell. Killed-virus vaccines haven't worked, and researchers are afraid of infecting a healthy person with any live form of the virus, even one that seems to have been disabled. The virus mutates so rapidly, unpredictably, and lethally that such an approach would be too dangerous. Infections like influenza and polio can often be eliminated even without the help of medicine. But once H.I.V. insinuates itself into the machinery of a cell, it is there until that cell is dead. It would, in fact, be difficult to design a more successful or insidious pathogen. Unlike the other viruses that commonly afflict humans, H.I.V. is a retrovirus: it doesn't simply attack our cells; it takes control of them by incorporating its genetic material into their DNA. The virus then becomes a permanent part of every infected cell, and, whenever those cells divide, H.I.V. goes with them.

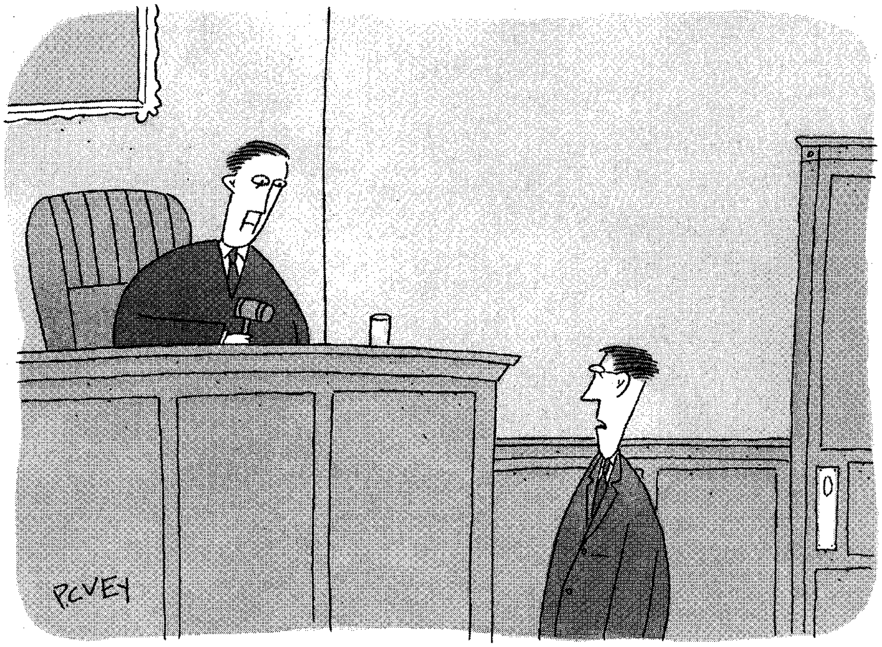
"When we looked at the Nairobi women who were coming into the cohort, virtually none of them had H.I.V.-specific T-cell immunity that we could detect," Rowland-Jones said. She explained that in a laboratory dish it was easy to infect their cells—but it wasn't in life. "If you look at the women after a couple of years, about twenty-five per cent show an increase in the number of T cells that can specifically fight off H.I.V. After three or four years, by which time they have met our definition of resistance, it was more than fifty per cent."

Armed with these findings, Rowland-Jones, McMichael, and their colleagues took an entirely new approach to designing a vaccine. They noticed that the Pumwani women's killer T cells were able to zero in on fragments of two particular proteins, which are produced by the H.I.V. virus and which then move to the surface of the infected cells. The Oxford team identified the DNA sequence that makes these proteins, and, on the assumption that they were particularly likely to attract killer T cells, used it to create a vaccine.

There are several subtypes of H.I.V., so a vaccine that proved effective in Thailand, say, might fail to protect Africans. What works in Kenya might not work in France. Different strains of the virus can even appear within the same city (and, at times, within the same person). The vaccine designed by McMichael, Hanke, and their colleagues is the first to address the specific viral subtype that is most prevalent in East Africa.

The vaccine has two components. The first is simply the naked DNA—an artificial copy of the relevant genes. The other component, used to further boost the immune response, is called M.V.A., or modified vaccine Ankara. It is a benign virus into which the researchers have inserted a copy of the same DNA sequence. Early evidence sug-

"If I had it to do all over again, I wouldn't change much—maybe part my hair on the other side."



"Before you sentence me, I'd like to remind the court that I was just passing through the building looking for a bathroom."

gests that, together, the DNA and the M.V.A. stimulate a bigger immune response than either would alone. "Whether that will be enough to stop the virus most or much of the time, and for how long, we just don't know," McMichael told me. "But we are encouraged. We are cautiously encouraged."

It is impossible to test these agents fully in animals or in the lab. What seems to succeed in mice often fails in macaques. Vaccines that work in some primates don't necessarily work in others. In the end, although animal experiments are essential, we cannot know whether a vaccine will protect us unless we try it on human subjects.

McMichael's vaccine—and those like it currently under development by researchers at Harvard and at Merck—is not ideal. The body builds permanent immunity to many infections—mumps, for instance, or measles. But when the Nairobi prostitutes stopped having sex with H.I.V.-positive people, their immune systems often lost the power to protect them. When they came back to the job, they were vulnerable to infection. "It means you need a constant level of exposure to the virus to stimulate T cells," Rowland-Jones explained. "And, of course, that might mean you need frequent booster shots." If so, it would defeat one of the main advantages of vaccines, which is that they can be delivered cheaply and don't require a high degree of compliance.

The likelihood of a partially effective vaccine—most researchers think the first vaccine on the market will be no more than forty or fifty per cent effective—is a troubling prospect. If used properly in high-risk groups, such a vaccine could slow the epidemic and save many lives. But people generally associate the word "vaccine" with the idea of total prevention. Once they get those shots, people may feel free to engage in the type of behavior that causes AIDS to spread. In fact, several studies have suggested that a partially effective AIDS vaccine, if its recipients became less vigilant about taking other precautions, could actually cause as much harm as it prevents.

This is one reason that researchers are so anxious about the results of the VaxGen trial. The company has said that it will distribute the vaccine only if it is effective at least thirty per cent of the time. What if the figure is thirty-two per cent? Even putting aside the epidemiological complications, its existence would mean that no future vaccine could be tested against a placebo: it would be unethical to do so, according to standard experimental guidelines, unless you have nothing better to offer. Yet the logistical and financial challenges of trying to get the VaxGen vaccine to every control group in every trial would be enormous. In addition, many researchers—including David Baltimore, a Nobel Prize winner, and Sarah Rowland-Jones—have wondered publicly how many times you can go back to the same communities and ask for their help. If the vaccine doesn't protect enough people, you will simply lose their support when a better candidate comes along.

"Let's be realistic for five minutes," Larry Corey, who is responsible for organizing the N.I.H.-supported network of vaccine trials, told me. "To create a vaccine that works maybe forty per cent of the time, that costs a thousand dollars, and that has side effects such that you have to go to a lab and get a blood test every six weeks"—which is the case with drug regimens—"is crap. What we need is a ninety-per-cent biologically active product that has no side effects, and that, at the most, costs around a hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars."

Almost no one who does AIDS research thinks that a genuine cure will be discovered soon. "I would have to say the virus is winning, not us," Anthony Fauci told me. Fauci is among the most forthcoming members of the American AIDS establishment. When I asked him whether we will have anything significant ten years from now, he winced. "My God, I hope so," he said. "I really do."

Bouncing along on one of Uganda's few good roads, you can easily spend three hours on the ninety-five-mile journey from Kampala to the Masaka district. The drive takes you straight across the equator, around the western edge of Lake Victoria, and toward the border with Tanzania. I went there early one morning with Anatoli Kamali, who works as an epidemiologist for the region's Medical Research Council, which is funded by the British government. The road passes through some of the world's lushest land; Churchill called Uganda the "pearl of Africa," and it is easy to see why. Not long after leaving behind the snarled traffic of the city, one is all but engulfed by a tangled cor-

"Would you take the guy at Table 4? I used to be his broker."

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ridor of vegetation. Equatorial butterflies hover at the edge of the roadway. Ebony, mahogany, teak, and fig trees fill the forest, which has more shades of green than I ever knew existed.

Nearly a million people live in Masaka—most of them scattered in small communities. The Medical Research Council has been following the lives and health of several thousand adults in twenty-five villages there since 1988. By now, the council has accumulated enough statistical documentation to fill warehouses on more than one continent: data on the rates of every possible sexually transmitted disease; how often condoms are used and under what circumstances; who is most likely to seek counselling; who wants to be tested for H.I.V.; and who comes back to get the results. Blood and DNA samples have been collected, stored, and analyzed by the truckload. This attention has made the people of Masaka unusual; the community is relatively well informed about what causes AIDS, there are dozens of clinics, and nobody goes hungry. If there is going to be a vaccine trial involving thousands of people and lasting up to a decade, Masaka has to be among the best places on earth to carry it out.

It is in regions like Masaka that the debate about the standard of medical treatment for volunteers turns into a question of how long, and how well, someone will live. At the same time, volunteers face basic uncertainties about whether the AIDS-vaccine trials will benefit them at all. "We are asking the Third World to take risks that we have actually never taken ourselves," Larry Corey told me. "Every other time that we have gone in with a vaccine—whether polio, measles, mumps—we have been able to say, 'It works on our people.' With AIDS, we can't say that. Now I have to build a global H.I.V. network, and I have to go to my colleagues in Botswana, Kenya, or Malawi and say, 'I have no idea if I have schlock or I have gold. But you need it and we need it, so we will have to test it on you.' There are really no other choices."

I never met a health-care professional in Africa who didn't understand this. African doctors live every day with uncertainty and inequity. More clearly than any disease before, AIDS has demonstrated the vast and unbridgeable gulf between the affluent north and the impoverished south. How can one compare the health care available in the United States or Europe with that of the Third World? Curable illnesses like diarrhea still kill more people every year than AIDS does. Even in Uganda, the rate of childhood vaccination—perhaps the best way to judge the over-all health of a nation—has declined recently, from forty-seven per cent in 1995 to thirty-seven per cent last year.

In Masaka, I toured the village of Kalungu with a census-taker named Irene. Her goal was simply to identify all the people who lived in the pale-yellow huts of the village, and then to ask basic questions about their age and marital status. You can't just walk up to a stranger—in Uganda or Utah—pull out a clipboard, and begin to ask about his sexual habits or health history. First, you have to lay the groundwork. So a local leader, somebody the villagers know and respect, always accompanies the census-takers. We were guided by a regal-looking woman named Teddy Nabwami. Dressed in a flowing brown-and-white tribal gown, her hair tied in a tight bundle to protect her head from the punishing sun, Nabwami led us from hovel to hovel, then sat silently on a straw mat while Irene asked questions.

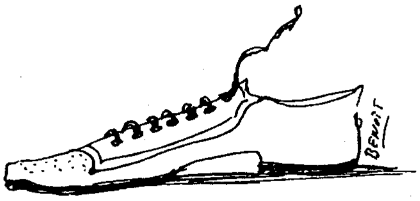
Mostly for my benefit, I suspect, she tried to find out what people knew about H.I.V. The majority said that it would probably kill them. Many knew that it was transmitted sexually, but they didn't have the vaguest notion of how it might be prevented.

We walked over to the local clinic, where a young medical student was on duty. I asked whether he thought it would be fair for the people in this village to enter a trial for a new AIDS vaccine if those who became infected did not receive antiretroviral drugs. He snorted and made a dismissive wave at the shelves on the wall. There were about two dozen neatly lettered red labels for a variety of pharmaceuticals. Half the labels—including those for aspirin and Paracetamol—had empty spaces above them. The selection was spotty; there was Fansidar (a highly effective malaria drug), but no ordinary, inexpensive antibiotic. Eight women sat on a bench in the waiting room; they all had children with them. A couple of the babies were crying, but most just stared blankly into space. "We are not getting the care you get," the medical student told me without a shred of bitterness in his voice. "We never will. But I would line up tomorrow to test anything that might help us in any way. And I am sure the rest of the village would, too."

Anyone who offers himself as a test subject for a vaccine that could end a plague surely deserves the best possible medical care. Perhaps that care should be better than the care that other people would receive in the same community; or perhaps entire villages should be entitled to the first access to new treatments. But medicine in Uganda will never be as good as it is at the Mayo Clinic, or even at a typical hospital in Moscow. Most people in Africa can't even afford to take a bus to get care at a free clinic. "Where does it start, and where does it end?" Seth Berkley asked me when we spoke one day. "Is it the best treatment for people in the trial? Is there an obligation to pay for current therapies? What about better therapies in the future? Are we supposed to pay for the state of the art for eternity? Nobody could afford it." There is a malady called Chagas' disease, or American trypanosomiasis. It can destroy the esophagus, the bowel, and the heart. End-stage Chagas' disease often results in heart failure. The only treatment is a heart transplant. Does this mean that in order to try to cure this disease in places like Mexico and Brazil, where it is endemic, everyone should receive a transplant? "We have always had this idea, which is simplistic, that justice requires treating everyone, everywhere exactly the same way," Ezekiel Emanuel, who is the chief of the bioethics branch at the N.I.H., told me. "Justice requires no such thing. Justice simply requires us to treat people fairly." If the rules of clinical trials required participants to receive the best care on earth, there would be no clinical trials.

Some activists in the West talk as if this were a price worth paying to avoid the risk of exploitation. In a speech that Marcia Angell gave at Princeton, she said, "People are not guinea pigs. Research must hold human welfare above the interest of society and science. If you breach this principle, you're on a slippery slope where first humans are exploited for worthwhile purposes, then for not so worthwhile purposes." This position suggests that one cannot hold the interests of society above the interests of an individual, that individual well-being is paramount. Yet in countries that have been devastated by AIDS, balancing the needs of society against those of the individual has never seemed more essential.

Five years ago, Angell led a highly public attack on Western scientists who were conducting trials in Africa, attempting to find a cheap, effective way to prevent a mother from passing the AIDS virus to her child at birth. The research was based on one of the more exciting discoveries of the past decade: that women who took the drug AZT during pregnancy could cut the risk of transmission by as much as two-thirds. But the drug regimen was too expensive and complicated for the women who needed it most, and public-health officials began looking for cheaper alternatives. They decided to follow more than fourteen thousand women in Thailand and Africa and gave AZT to a third of them in various doses. The rest received placebos. At the time, Angell wrote that allowing the women to go without AZT—when doctors knew it worked and Western women would have received it—was "a retreat from ethical principles," and she invoked that most incendiary of comparisons the Tuskegee experiment. Peter Lurie, who is South African and is no stranger to the clinics of the Third World, said that the tests proved there was a two-tiered standard for health care in the world—one set of rules for rich people and another for those who are poor. The recriminations were harsh, and their effects have lingered.



African scientists saw it differently, however. "The women were not going to get any treatment anyway," Pontiano Kaleebu told me. "Instead, thousands received AZT, and that saved their babies. And we found out that it works in much smaller doses—and it has been one of the great discoveries for us in the entire epidemic. If Marcia Angell had her way, though, we still wouldn't know what works, because we would never have been able to do the studies."

The day I left Uganda, I went to see Edward Mbidde, who is the director of the Uganda Cancer Institute and among Africa's most internationally prominent vaccine advocates. Mbidde is a powerfully built, imposing man. He wore a dark-green dashiki, and speaks in the rich, deliberate tones of the English-educated African élite. His office is at the Old Mulago Hospital, which for years was at the center of the AIDS epidemic, and it sits on a hill overlooking the streets of Kampala. Despite ample reason for despair, Mbidde has always remained determined and optimistic.

"In many ways, these last fifteen years have been the best Uganda has ever seen," he told me. I must have gasped, because he laughed, and then said, "What I mean by that is simple enough. We have leadership, we have support, and we are united. Who else in Africa can say that? Can you imagine what would have happened to Uganda if AIDS had come along during the time of Idi Amin?" Mbidde travels widely, and he long ago decided that without an AIDS vaccine Africa is in peril, and that the only way to find one that works is to experiment on people—his people.

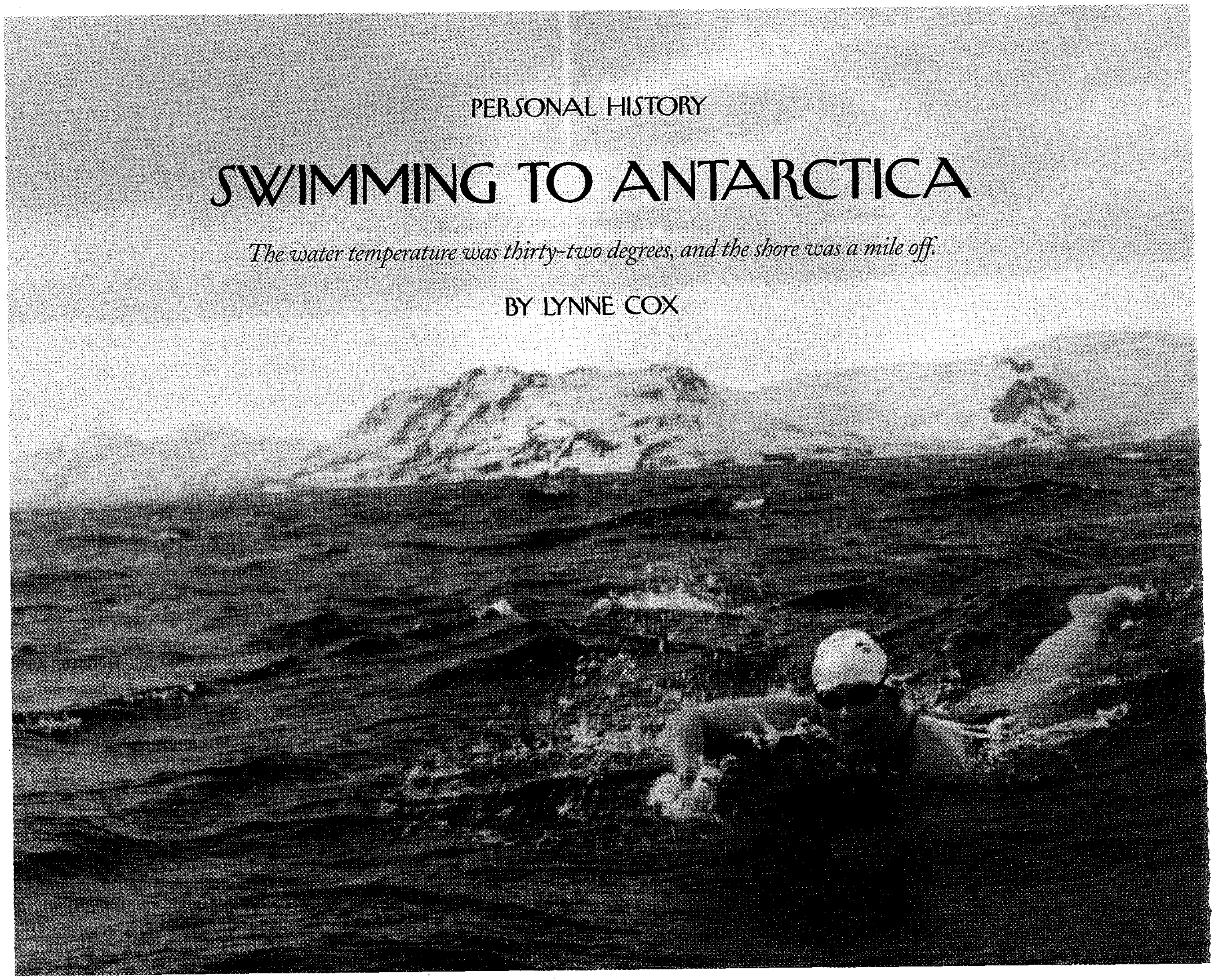
"If you are living in New York or Florida, you can sit on the beach or work in a skyscraper. You have a different view of what the world is like than we do," he said. "Perhaps it is a better world. Yet if we need to go to work, and we cannot afford a Mercedes-Benz, should we refuse to ride on a motorcycle? Or should we get there by the best route we have? You do what you can in this life, and in Kampala we cannot do everything. Principles matter as much to us as they do to Americans. But we have been dying for a long time, and you cannot respond to death with principles." ♦

PERSONAL HISTORY

SWIMMING TO ANTARCTICA

The water temperature was thirty-two degrees, and the shore was a mile off.

BY LYNNE COX

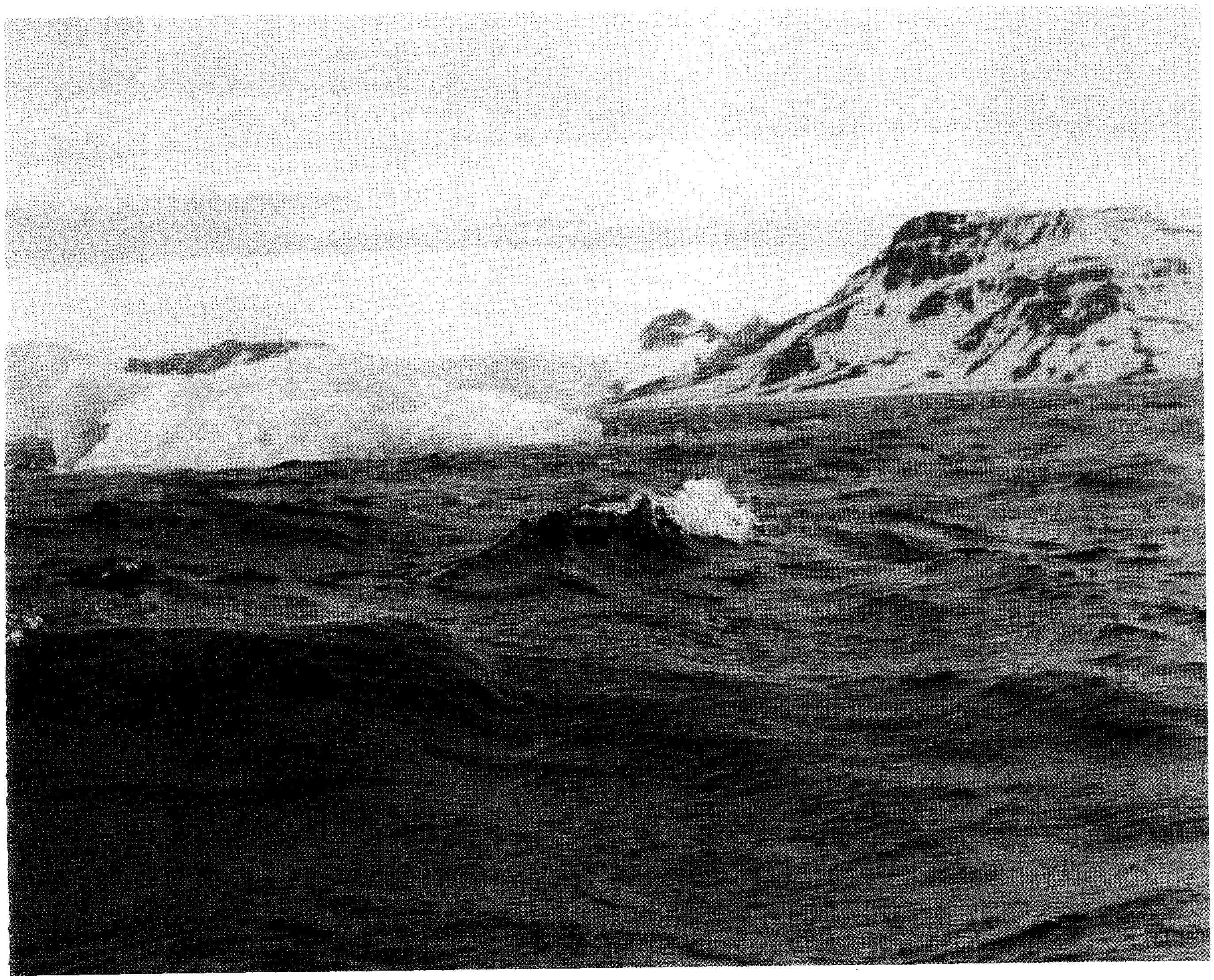


GABRIELLA MIOTTO

Standing near the stern of the Orlova, a Yugoslav ship bound for the Antarctic Peninsula, I held on tight to the metal guardrails as five-foot waves in the Beagle Channel shattered against the bow, rocking the ship and shooting icy spray into my face. It was eight o'clock on a December evening, two hours before sunset, and I watched the colorful hillside of Ushuaia, the southernmost city in Argentina, fade into an expanding gray sea. Within minutes, sleet and wind gusting to sixty knots drove me into my cabin, where I changed into a warm pair of sweats and climbed up into my bunk bed, preparing for the journey through the Drake Passage, at the edge of the Southern Ocean. If conditions are favorable, it takes about a day and a half to travel from Ushuaia to the Antarctic Peninsula, but everything depends on the weather and the waves. Storm fronts can move in rapidly and sometimes remain in a powerful holding pattern for days. The energy from these storms can affect the entire Southern Ocean and the waters along the coasts of New Zealand, Australia, South America, and South Africa, where waves called cape rollers have been known to punch holes in supertankers.

Waves in the Drake Passage itself can reach fifty feet, and as the Orlova sailed east toward the Atlantic I could feel them increasing in size and frequency. In the upper bunk, where I was trying to sleep, there was no guardrail, so I turned onto my side, stuck my hand between the bed and the wall, and held on. Somehow I managed to sleep, until a rogue wave hit the ship and I was thrown to the opposite edge of the bunk. It was two o'clock in the morning. Chairs toppled, cupboards snapped open, luggage clattered to the floor. The ship's engines suddenly slowed, which meant that the waves were going to get larger still. Soon, twenty-five-foot waves were smashing against the porthole. I had spent the past two years training for a swim through some of the coldest water in the world and onto the shores of Antarctica. Now I wasn't sure if the boat would even get there.

When I was three years old, I learned how to swim in a lake called Snow Pond, in Maine, where my mother's father had taught her to swim. I swam there in the summer, and the rest of the year I took lessons in an indoor heated pool. I started entering swim meets a couple of years later, but it wasn't until my family moved to California, in 1969, and I participated in a race in the Pacific that I realized how much I loved swimming in open water. In August, 1971, when I was fourteen years old, I swam twenty-seven miles, from



Catalina Island, in Southern California, across the Catalina Channel to the mainland. The swim took twelve hours and thirty-six minutes, and, as I touched the shore, I knew that I wanted to swim the English Channel, the Mt. Everest of distance swimming.

The water in the English Channel in summer was between 55 and 60 degrees Fahrenheit, about ten degrees colder than the Catalina Channel in August. I believed I could swim the distance—depending on the currents, it could be anything from twenty-one miles to more than thirty miles—but I had no idea whether I would be able to survive the cold. According to English Channel swimming rules, swimmers can wear only a bathing suit, a swim cap, and goggles, although they are permitted to use grease, which is thought to serve as a layer of insulation. Many Channel swimmers have suffered problems with the cold; some have gone into hypothermia, and a few have died from exposure. My father, who is a physician, believed that the more I could acclimate to cold water during the year, the less stressful my swim would be. I began swimming only in the Pacific Ocean, and I continued during the winter, when the water temperature dropped as low as fifty degrees. I wore light clothes all year long, and always slept without blankets and with the windows open. My father was right. When I was fifteen, I broke the men's and women's records for swimming the English Channel, completing a twenty-seven-mile crossing in nine hours and fifty-seven minutes. The following year, the record was broken by a man; I returned, and broke it again, finishing a thirty-three-mile swim in nine hours and thirty-six minutes.

There are swimmers who return year after year to cross the Channel, but I wanted to do something that had never been done before. I heard about a swim across the Cook Strait, between the North and South Islands of New Zealand. Three men had crossed successfully; a handful of women had tried, but none of them had finished. The islands are about ten miles apart, and I thought that I could complete the crossing in about four hours. In February, 1975, after five hours of swimming, I was farther from the finish than when I had started. The waves were nine feet high, the winds gusting to forty knots, and I doubted that I could continue. The crew in the support boat next to me included a radio announcer who was broadcasting

A friend once watched a leopard seal rip a penguin out of its skin. He advised me to get out of the water quickly if I saw one.

news about the swim. Listeners began calling in, and the announcer relayed their words to me. Somehow, the confidence and concern in their messages forced me on, and, after twelve hours in the water, I reached South Island. The next day, church bells rang throughout the country to celebrate the swim. I felt as though New Zealanders had shared my struggle when I was in the water, and it made me realize that a swim could be more than an athletic event. It was a way of bringing people together. A year later, in 1976, I crossed the Strait of Magellan, off the southern coast of Chile. In the following years, I swam around the Cape of Good Hope, at the southern tip of South Africa; across Lake Titicaca, from Bolivia to Peru; and through the Gulf of Aqaba, from Egypt to Israel and then from Israel to Jordan. In 1987, when I was thirty years old, I completed my most challenging swim—crossing the Bering Strait, from the United States to the Soviet Union. It had taken eleven years to secure permission from the Soviet Union, and dense fog in the strait sent me dangerously off course, but after two hours I reached the shore, where a Soviet welcoming committee was waiting.

Several times over the years, scientists have asked me if I would participate in cold studies. Most people find swimming or sitting in cold water uncomfortable, so there are few volunteers for these studies and little data on cold-water endurance. Barbara Drinkwater, an exercise physiologist at the Institute of Environmental Stress at the University of California, Santa Barbara, wanted to find out how I was able to swim in cold water without going into hypothermia. The studies would be a way for me to understand how my body functioned, enabling me to explore my own limits. So in 1976 I became a human research subject. In one experiment at the institute, I sat for an hour in my swimsuit in water that was fifty degrees, and a rectal probe was used to measure my temperature. My response was unusual: all the other participants in the test shivered, and their core temperatures dropped; I did not shiver, and my temperature remained stable.

Heat loss in cold water happens up to twenty-five times faster than in cold air, and it can be deadly. For most people, exercise in cold water increases this heat loss. During physical activity, blood from the body's core is sent out to the working muscles in the extremities—the arms, legs, fingers, and toes. The blood close to the skin's surface is then cooled by the surrounding water and air before it's pumped back. The body attempts to combat the cold and maintain heat by vasoconstriction—closing down the blood vessels to the surface and the extremities and keeping the body's heat around vital organs like the heart and the brain. At some point, though, in a process known as vasodilation, the blood flow opens again as a way of insuring that oxygen gets to the tissues in the extremities. Once again, colder blood is returned to the core, and people may become hypothermic, disoriented, unresponsive, severely dehydrated, develop an irregular heartbeat, and go into cardiac arrest.

That fall, I began training for a December swim across the Strait of Magellan. The biggest obstacle would be the water temperature, which was between 42 and 44 degrees Fahrenheit. No one had attempted the swim before, and little was known about how the human body would respond. Drinkwater accompanied me and gathered data on a training swim in the ocean off Santa Barbara. After four hours of swimming in fifty-degree water, my body temperature actually increased, from my normal temperature of 97.6 to 102 degrees. Drinkwater believed that my body was good at closing down blood flow to its peripheral areas. This ability, coupled with the fact that, like most women, I have an even distribution of fat throughout my body, acted as an internal wetsuit. I have large muscles, and was exercising so vigorously in the water, Drinkwater said, that I was able to create more heat than I lost.

In the early nineteen-nineties, William Keatinge, one of the world's leading experts on hypothermia, asked me if I would participate in a study in his lab, at the University of London. During one part of the study, I sat in a Jacuzzi that was set at forty-two degrees for an hour and a half, moving my arms back and forth. My core temperature dipped for a short time, but quickly stabilized. (The only other person whose temperature didn't plummet during this experiment was an Icelandic fisherman who had survived a shipwreck in frigid waters near the Westman Islands. All four of his shipmates had perished, but he had acclimated to extremely cold temperatures while working on the deck of a fishing boat, and he was able to swim three miles to shore.) However, my skin temperature had cooled down to the temperature of the water, and as soon as I got out my core temperature dropped. Keatinge advised me to get into a warm bath to rewarm. It was painful. My skin began to sting and itch, and it became splotchy. Being immersed in warm water caused further vasodilation, and by the time I climbed out of the warm bath the inside of my body was colder than it had been when I was sitting in the Jacuzzi.

Another part of the study examined whether blood flow could be regulated at the fingertips. Along with seventy-six premed students, I had to immerse my left hand in thirty-two-degree water for half an hour. Fresh water freezes at thirty-two degrees, but in the experiment the water was constantly circulated, to prevent it from crystallizing and to maintain an even temperature. The pain was intense. Some of the students shouted and pounded on the wall, and one sang. I stayed absolutely still, and talked myself into keeping my hand in the water. Keatinge believed that, through my cold-water training, I was able to control blood flow at my fingertips, so that I didn't lose heat to the water. The results made me wonder: If I could immerse my hand in water that cold, would I be able to swim in it?

When I was seventeen and in New Zealand, preparing to attempt the Cook Strait crossing, I was met on the beach after a practice swim by a member of the local lifesaving association. He handed me a small blue penguin. It was soft, fuzzy, and warm, the size of a calico cat. The man said that it had swum all the way from Antarctica.

COURTESY SHOWDOWN
STOP
P. BYRNES.

"He can wave till his hand falls off. I'm not going first."

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When I asked him how a baby penguin could swim across the Pacific Ocean to New Zealand, he laughed. He was joking, he said, and explained that this breed, a fairy penguin, was indigenous to New Zealand. I supported the penguin under its feet, and held it close to me. It wriggled, turned, and bit me hard on the neck. Afterward, every time I thought about the penguin, I thought of Antarctica.

A year later, after I'd swum across the Magellan Strait, I met two tourists in Chile who had flown across Antarctica. I longed to go there, too, but I had to get back to college in California. In 1978, when I swam around the Cape of Good Hope, I encountered twenty-foot waves generated by storms near Antarctica, more than two thousand miles away. And many years later, in 1990, when I returned to South America to swim across the Beagle Channel, which separates Argentina and Chile, an admiral in the Argentine Navy, who had provided support during the swim, offered me passage on a military supply ship heading to an Argentine base camp in the Antarctic Peninsula. It fascinated me, because it was a place without borders, but, once again, I had to get back home. I was beginning to feel like James Cook. I had completely circled Antarctica but had never been there.

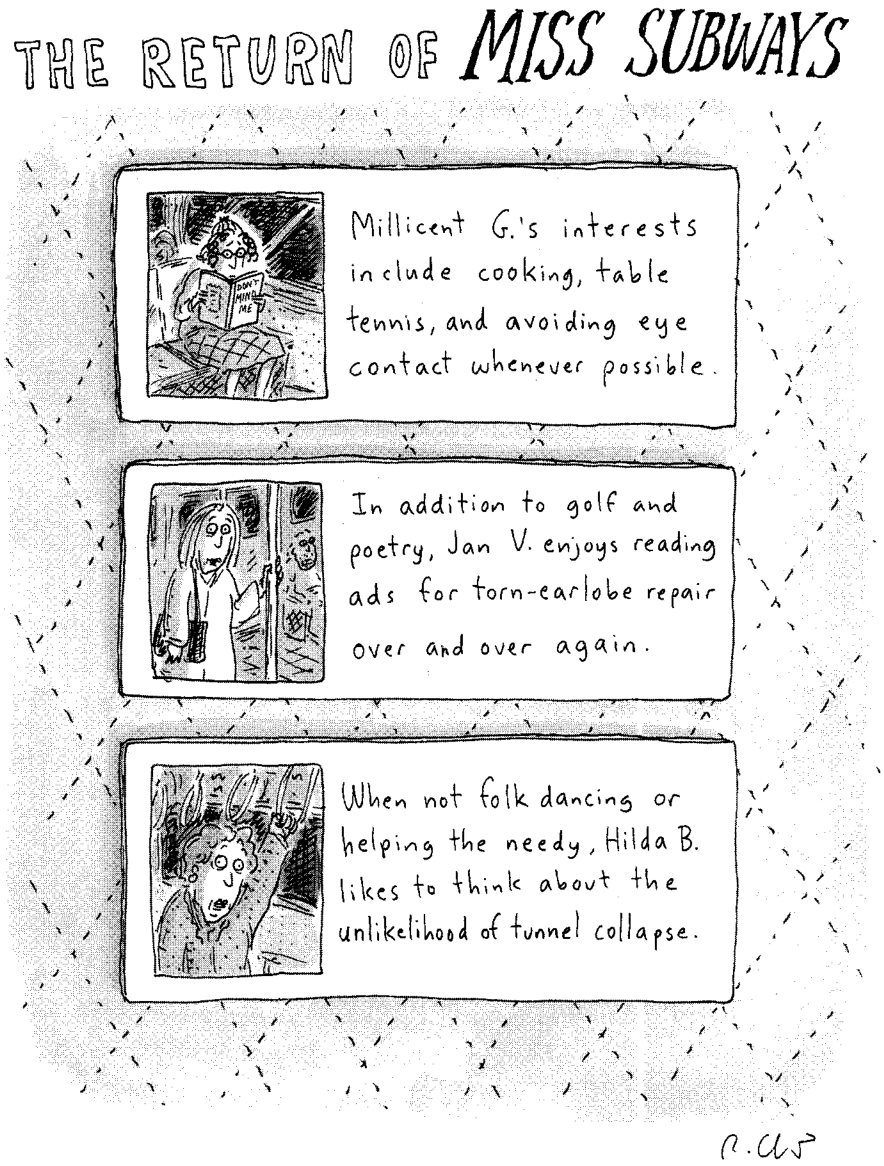
Three years ago, I swam across the northern lakes of Italy. This swim was just for fun, and I even asked a friend who was an opera singer to sing to me as I swam. But afterward I felt that something was lacking. I was forty-three years old, and I needed a project that was more challenging, one that would draw on all my experience, and it suddenly occurred to me that what I wanted to do was swim to Antarctica.

The coldest water I'd swum in was in the Bering Strait, where the temperature dropped from forty-two degrees to thirty-eight degrees for the last thirty minutes of my two-hour swim. The water along the Antarctic Peninsula could be as much as four or five degrees colder. No one knew how far someone would be able to swim in those temperatures, and I wondered what the effect of the cold would be for every degree below thirty-eight degrees. During the Second World War, pilots and submariners who were rescued from waters at these temperatures often suffered from "immersion injury," which involved swelling of the extremities and, in some cases, debilitating nerve and muscle damage. After Keatinge's hand experiment, it was three months before full sensation returned to my fingertips. I wasn't sure what would happen in Antarctic waters, but I intended to swim as fast as I possibly could.

I'm a distance swimmer, not a sprinter, and I would have to build strength and speed. Between December, 2000, and December, 2001, I worked out at the gym, and in the ocean, five days a week, two or three hours a day. After a year, I still wasn't strong enough, so I started working with Jonathan Moch, a trainer and former high-school wrestler. In Antarctica, I planned to swim mostly with my head up, to prevent heat loss. That spring, Moch and I began with strength training, using free weights and making sure that I kept my head up throughout the workout. Then we developed stability and balance to help me in the water. And, finally, we worked on endurance. Swimming with the head up increases the drag of a swimmer's body in the water, and it can feel as though you're swimming uphill. In preparation for this, I was doing every exercise in the workout to the point of fatigue.

I also walked five or six miles a day with a friend from my home town of Los Alamitos, Barry Binder, who had accompanied me on past swims and who was planning to come to Antarctica. In the afternoon, I swam fast for an hour in an unheated back-yard pool. And every weekend I sprinted—swimming as fast as I could for three to four miles in the Pacific Ocean, off Seal Beach, in California. Between workouts, I spent hours drafting letters, making phone calls, setting up meetings, and making presentations to possible sponsors. Quark Expeditions, a Connecticut-based company that runs educational tours to Antarctica, agreed to help, allowing me to use one of its ships as the base for the swim as well as providing logistical support.

Last November, after nearly two years of training, I visited Dr. Robert (Brownie) Schoene, a pulmonary specialist at the University of Washington who had helped me prepare for previous swims. Dr. Schoene ran a series of pulmonary-function and maximum-exercise tests, which showed that I was in excellent physical shape. Still, I had some concerns about the tides, weather, ice conditions, and water temperatures in Antarctica. A friend who had spent nine seasons diving there told me that he once watched a leopard seal fling a penguin fifteen feet into the air, and then rip it out of its skin. He advised me to get out of the water quickly if I saw a leopard seal or an orca—a killer whale. There


THE RETURN OF MISS SUBWAYS
DON'T MIND ME
Millicent G.'s interests include cooking, table tennis, and avoiding eye contact whenever possible.
In addition to golf and poetry, Jan V. enjoys reading ads for torn-earlobe repair over and over again.
When not folk dancing or helping the needy, Hilda B. likes to think about the unlikelihood of tunnel collapse.

had been only one report of a killer whale attacking a person in the wild, but I decided I needed to find a swimsuit that was not black, white, or red. I didn't want to look like a penguin or signal that I was an injured animal.

I was interested, though, in the ways in which Antarctic animals adapt to the cold; perhaps I could learn something that would help me extend my time in the water. Penguins have a double layer of feathers, and the air between the layers serves as insulation. I decided to grow my hair long so that I could pile it up on my head, trapping air in my swim cap, like penguin feathers. When penguins dive into the ocean, their feathers get pressed together and no longer provide insulation, and the birds rely on their body fat to act as an internal wetsuit. Antarctic seals—Weddell, Ross, crabeater, leopard, and elephant—stay warm by building up layers of blubber. By the time the water temperature dropped to fifty degrees in the back-yard pool, I had put on twelve pounds by adding more carbohydrates and fat to my diet. John Heyning, a marine-mammal expert with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, who has studied thermoregulation in whales, told me that humpback whales were able to stay warm while feeding by diverting the heat in their blood from their tongues back into their bodies. I had never considered what effect getting cold water in my mouth, or ingesting it, would have on my temperature. Another concern was the effect that intense cold would have on my teeth and ears. A friend recalled reading a book about the Antarctic explorer Apsley Cherry-Garrard which described how his teeth had shattered in minus-sixty-six-degree weather. Temperatures along the Antarctic Peninsula rarely drop much below freezing in summer, but I wondered if my teeth would conduct the cold. My dentist, Dr. William Poe, explained that because teeth have microscopic pores they are often sensitive to the cold. He gave me a series of fluoride treatments that filled these pores. He also offered to make custom earplugs out of dental impression, which would fit snugly in my ears, preventing water from seeping in and damaging my eardrums.

The period after the swim was potentially dangerous, possibly more critical than the swim itself, because I would no longer be exercising. During the Antarctic winter, male emperor penguins incubate the eggs containing their offspring, huddling together on the ice to conserve body heat. When I crossed the Bering Strait, a Russian expert on hypothermia, who had been sent from Moscow, assisted afterward. She made me get into a sleeping bag, and then placed hot-water bottles on the arteries on either side of my neck, under my arms, and in the groin area while she leaned against me to give me her body heat; it was much less painful than immediately immersing myself in a hot bath. For the Antarctic swim, one of my friends designed a scarf, top, and pants for the rewarming phase. She sewed two felt pockets into the scarf, two pockets under the arms of the top, and two in the front of the pants, where we would place hand warmers. At the end of the swim, the crew would huddle around me, to block the wind, and help me put on the warm clothes.

For knowledge about tides, weather, and currents, I relied on Susan Adie, the expedition leader for Quark Expeditions. In the past, I had started every swim from one landmass and finished on another, but for this swim there was no land I could start from. Adie and I decided that I would swim from the ship to the shore. Once the Orlova reached the sub-Antarctic islands and the Antarctic Peninsula, Adie and the ship's Russian ice master, Valery Eremin, would determine whether conditions were safe enough for me to attempt a swim.

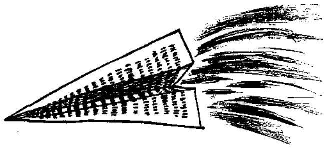
Landing places would be limited. There aren't many beaches on the Antarctic continent, and icebergs sometimes flow into the ones that do exist, making them inaccessible. What's more, because the weather can change in an instant, from a calm sea with no wind to five-foot waves and fifty-knot winds, there is no way to predict the tides. Some days there are two tides in a day, Adie told me, sometimes one, and the tidal strength varies. I would be attempting the swim during a neap tide, when the moon was half full, which meant that the tide would not be as strong as it would be during a full moon. "In Antarctica, you just have to be flexible and patient," Adie said, adding that there could be platelet ice—patches of ice on top of the water—which could cut me. If there was any brash ice—broken or crumbled ice that can reach the size of a Volkswagen—I would not be able to swim. "When the icebergs break off the glaciers and hit the water, they cause mini-tsunamis," she explained. "If you're in the water with brash ice when that happens, it could kill you."

After two and a half days of sailing through violent seas in the Drake Passage, the Orlova encountered calmer waters, and Eremin was able to adjust his course so that we were sailing directly toward the South Shetland Islands. We began seeing large icebergs, as well as albatross and petrels gliding on the air waves created by the ship's forward movement. Some of the icebergs had sharp, jagged edges; others were smooth, their contours softened by the wind and water. We were travelling at about twelve knots, and if the weather remained stable we would reach the Antarctic Peninsula in two days. I had a crew of seven people with me, including three doctors, and most of them had been seasick for the past two days. We were relieved when we heard that there were chinstrap penguins on some of the larger ice floes. It meant we were nearing Antarctica. The Orlova's other passengers had taken the expedition to see Antarctic wildlife, and we joined them on the ship's bridge to watch the penguins.

Before attempting a swim, I sat down with Adie; Dr. Anthony Bloch, the ship's doctor; who was usually based in Australia as an emergency-room physician; and two other members of my crew. We agreed that the crew would be divided among the Orlova's three inflatable boats, called Zodiacs. Barry Binder would give me directions, the doctors would be collecting data and watching me for signs of hypothermia, and other crew members would be looking out for leopard seals, orcas, and icebergs. A CBS film crew would come along to document the swim. In an emergency, one crew member, wearing a dry suit—which is like a wetsuit but is sealed and filled with air to prevent water from entering—would be prepared to jump into the water, inflate his suit, and lift me to the surface.

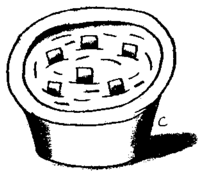
Dr. Bloch wanted to run through an additional drill with my three doctors in case I went into cardiac arrest during the swim. When he asked me to participate in a stretcher drill to see if my crew members could carry me up the Orlova's steep gangway, I declined, thinking that it would be like practicing for my own death. For two years, maybe a hundred times a day, I had been mentally rehearsing my success, not my death. Somebody volunteered to practice the drill, but the crew members couldn't lift the stretcher up the steep gangway, so we decided that in an emergency they would attach the ship's crane to a Zodiac and lift it, with me inside, on board. There was one more question: How would the crew pull me from the water if I was wearing only a swimsuit? There was very little fabric on my swimsuit for anyone to grab. I suggested to Barry that he put a six-inch-long rope through the top of my swimsuit straps and knot it. This would be an effective handhold.

I wanted to do a test swim before attempting a long swim. My goal was to swim for ten minutes, so that I could judge my endurance in the water. But the weather wasn't coöperating; winds off the South Shetlands were gusting to fifty knots, and it was sleeting. Finally, four days into our journey, when we reached King George Island, in the South Shetlands, north of the Antarctic Peninsula, conditions improved. I put on my bathing suit, and waited in the games room, looking out the window as the wind stirred the water. The two-foot waves were becoming whitecaps. I stared out the porthole at Admiralty Bay, on King George Island, and focussed on the small, bright-yellow buildings that constituted Arctowski, a Polish research base. Picturing my body as a thermos, I drank four eight-ounce glasses of hot water to generate more inner heat and to prevent severe dehydration at the end of the swim. When one of the doctors took my temperature before the start of the swim, it was 99.5 degrees, well above normal, which could give me more time in the water. But, when I glanced out the window again, I saw that the waves were cresting faster. The wind had increased to thirty knots. I took a deep breath, trying to calm myself. I knew the swim could be called off at any moment. Finally, a crew member told me that everyone was ready; the boats were in position.



When I stepped outside the Orlova, I was hit by a blast of glacial wind. Goosepimples rose up all over my body, and my hair whorled around my head like helicopter rotors. Quickly, I retreated into the ship, trying to conserve every calorie of body heat. The water temperature in Admiralty Bay was 33 degrees Fahrenheit, and the air temperature was thirty-four degrees, but the wind off the surrounding glaciers made it feel as if I were standing inside a freezer. Winding my hair around my hand and pushing it into either side of my swim cap, I went back outside and stepped onto the gangway. I looked up and saw clouds rushing past the glaciers. Holding my goggles in my left hand and clutching the railing, feeling the ice-cold metal against my feet, I walked down the stairs. Pausing for a moment, I saw the crew below in the three Zodiacs, looking tense and excited. When I reached the platform at the base of the gangway, I sat down, and it felt as if I were sitting on a wet metal ice-cube tray. The platform was swaying and rolling. The waves were an icy, silvery blue, breaking inches below my feet. I leaned backward to gain momentum and then threw myself forward.

The water was searing cold. I felt



as if I were naked, standing still, and being sprayed with ice water from a high-pressure hose, and it took all my focus to move. I swam with my head above water, panting. It was incredibly difficult to catch my breath; my lungs felt as if they were being squeezed in a tight corset. I couldn't get them to expand fully, but I needed oxygen. I knew that I wouldn't be able to continue for more than a couple of minutes unless I overcame my inclination to hyperventilate. I forced myself to slow down, to pull in a breath through my mouth, and then to blow it all the way out. It was extremely tiring, but concentrating on my breath prevented me from thinking about the cold. As my breathing evened out, I began to notice other sensations. The water felt different from any other water I'd swum in, as if it were more solid than fluid, as though I were swimming through a liquid Sno-Kone. I checked my hands. They were red and swollen and, like my feet, had become numb and achy. I was barely kicking, but I always swam this way: ninety-nine per cent of my propulsion through the water comes from my arms and upper body, while my legs just stabilize my stroke. One friend, who had spent years studying polar bears, told me I swam like a polar bear, which uses its feet as a rudder, probably, he said, as a means of containing heat. Because I wasn't kicking, I wasn't pumping much blood to my feet and legs. I paused in mid-stroke to look at my watch. I had been swimming for only a minute.

A wave shattered in my face. I choked, and started to panic. I knew I had to keep swimming; it was too cold to stop. I kept spinning my arms, trying to swallow and clear my throat. Another wave slammed into my face. I was choking harder, and feeling even more panicked. I couldn't breathe. I considered rolling over onto my back, but decided it was too cold and this would slow me down too much. Instead, I put my head into the water so that I was no longer choking on the spray. My body flattened, and I began swimming through the water instead of climbing up against it. It was easier to breathe; I could roll my head and shoulder to one side or the other. I was almost swimming normally, pulling, pushing, gliding through the water, slipping under the waves, letting them wash over me, each stroke strong and fluid. As I moved across the sub-Antarctic sea, I looked at the glaciers that encircled the harbor. My torso and head felt warm on the inside, and I relaxed just a little. Turning my head left on a breath, then right on another breath, then lifting my head up, I looked at the faces of the crew, which were filled with concern. I lifted my right foot out of the water and waved it. This was a signal that everything was O.K. They grinned and waved back.

When I glanced at my watch again, I saw that I had reached my goal of ten minutes. But the more I could do now, I thought, the more confidence I would have for the final swim; indeed, if the weather turned, this could be my only opportunity to swim. When I reached the fifteen-minute mark, I glanced down and saw five or six streams of bubbles that looked like vapor trails in the sky—penguins were swimming so fast underneath me that all I could see was their bubbles. To my left were icebergs. We were moving into their float path, and the crew began shouting warnings to me, pointing at the water. I swam around the bergs, and my arms started to feel colder. I could see that we were getting closer to the beach, but the intensity of the cold was sapping my strength. Large chunks of ice were floating all around me, drifting at a rate of about a knot, parallel to the beach. The entire crew was on full alert, helping me to steer through the iceberg field. A piece the size of a soccer ball bounced off my forehead, and it brought hot tears to my eyes. Another piece, twice as big, hit me on the side of the head. I shook my head to ease the pain, and increased my speed, trying to get clear of the ice field.

The crew got out of the boats and scrambled up the embankment, waiting for me with towels and blankets. Ten feet from shore, I saw smooth gray rocks, and then the bottom rose up to meet me. I turned my head to breathe, and saw some of the passengers from the Orlova who had been hiking along the shore. They were running toward us, slipping a little on the ice, and waving. As I stood up, I heard cheers and muffled clapping. I had surprised everyone, including myself. I'd planned to swim for only ten minutes, but I had been in the water for twenty-two minutes and fourteen seconds. The crew surrounded me, blocking the wind and drying me off. In a few moments, I felt very cold. My legs were bright red, and bleeding from tiny scratches made by pieces of ice in the water. My feet and legs felt numb. A crew member took off his boots and helped me put them on, and we trudged across the rocks. Crossing a small brook, we entered one of the yellow buildings I'd seen from the Orlova, where three startled Polish researchers, who were studying water samples, greeted us. I lay down in a corner, wrapped in blankets, and shivered violently as two doctors, one on either side, helped me to rewarm. One of the doctors then measured my temperature; it had dropped only a little, to 97.7 degrees. It was much higher than expected. Still, I was shaking hard, and my teeth were chattering, but this activity was raising my metabolism and creating heat to counteract the return of cooled blood to the core. It was nearly forty-five minutes before I stopped shivering and felt warm again.

That night, I thought about what had worked and what hadn't during the swim. I knew that I could swim almost a mile in Antarctic waters, and, for the most part, I was pleased with everything my crew and I had done. Yet I also had to acknowledge that I was exhausted, and that I had lost some sensation in my fingers, toes, and skin. I didn't like feeling so cold afterward: my body had to work too hard to warm up. So I decided that next time I would swim faster, in order to generate more heat. The water would probably be a degree colder, around freezing, in part because so many glaciers were melting. Once I was in the water, I had to judge how far I could push myself, but if I made a mistake I trusted my crew.

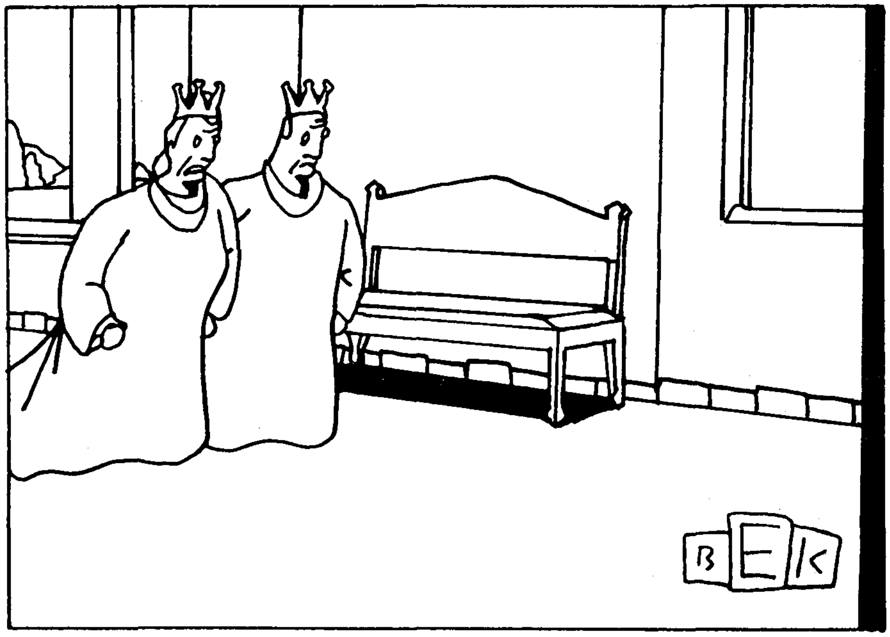
The next day, the weather was so bad that no one was able to land on Deception Island, eighty miles southwest of King George Island, so we continued sailing south, hoping there would be a break in the storm. The following morning, the weather had improved, and Adie told me that there were three possible sites for the swim. The first was Waterboat Point, on the Antarctic Peninsula, a hundred and fifty miles southwest of Deception Island; the second, a few miles to the north, was Neko Harbor; and the third, to the south, was Paradise Bay. Waterboat Point was filled with icebergs, and there was no beach to land on. We turned and headed for Neko Harbor. Two hours later, we anchored offshore, and things looked good. The sun was appearing and disappearing through the clouds as the wind blew in short gusts off the glaciers—a signal that the weather might not hold for long. I studied the shore carefully. The beach was less than four hundred feet wide, and was surrounded by glaciers so high that I had to tilt my head all the way back in order to see the tops of them; some had fracture lines, and looked as if they might break off at any moment. The beach was clear of ice, and shaped like a half-moon. It was composed of broken, shalelike rock in shades of brown, gold, taupe, and terracotta. This rock could hurt my feet when I landed. There were long bands of snow on the beach; some pure white, others furrowed with what are known as penguin highways—paths where the birds had walked, streaked a rusty-orange color from their droppings. The wind was down to only ten knots, but if we strayed off course—eight hundred feet to the right or left of the beach—we would be directly below a glacier face. If the glacier calved while we were under it, falling ice could kill us, or the wave created by the splash could cause the boats to capsize. In any case, we wouldn't be able to land, because the glacier made a sheer drop to the water. I wished I had some idea how fast the current was moving and in what direction. If it pushed me too far in one direction or the other, I might not make it to the beach.

Barry threaded the rope through my swimsuit, and I told him that, no matter what happened, I wanted to swim a mile. He promised me that I would. Eremin watched from the bridge. He would follow our course, plot it out, and use the ship's global-positioning system to calculate the precise distance we covered. The crew climbed into the Zodiacs, and I pulled off my sweatsuit and hurried down the gangway. The air temperature was thirty-two degrees—two degrees colder than it had been the day before—and the wind tore heat from my body. I sat down on the platform and looked at the icy gray-blue water and then at the land. It seemed a long way off.

Taking a deep breath, I lunged forward, slipped, and hit the water face first. Although the water was a degree colder than it had been the day before, it actually felt warmer. (After the swim, I realized that nerve damage from the first swim had diminished my ability to perceive the cold.) It took longer than before to catch my breath, and my breathing was much more labored. I was tired, and I couldn't understand why. One of the crew members, who was counting my strokes, told me afterward that I was spinning my arms at ninety strokes a minute, thirty strokes a minute faster than my normal rate. The crew sensed that I was struggling, and I could see doubt on some faces. I told myself that I had to sprint faster than I'd ever sprinted in my life.

I could feel my shoulders moving in circles, but my arms were numb and burning, and something else was wrong—the boats were veering to the left. We were heading directly for a glacier. "Where are we going, Barry?" I shouted. He pointed toward the glacier. It didn't make any sense, but I trusted that he knew something I didn't. The cold was moving deeper into my arms and legs. Suddenly, the boats changed course, turning sharply to the right. I was getting agitated, but I followed them. Then I realized that, by zigzagging, Barry was adding distance, to insure that I swam a mile. I put my face into the water and felt the shock throughout my body. "Stretch out," I told myself. The water was thicker and much colder than it had been two days ago. It was also bluer, saturated with the brightness of the Antarctic sun and the reflections off the ice and snow. It was almost vibrating, and clearer than any water I'd been in.

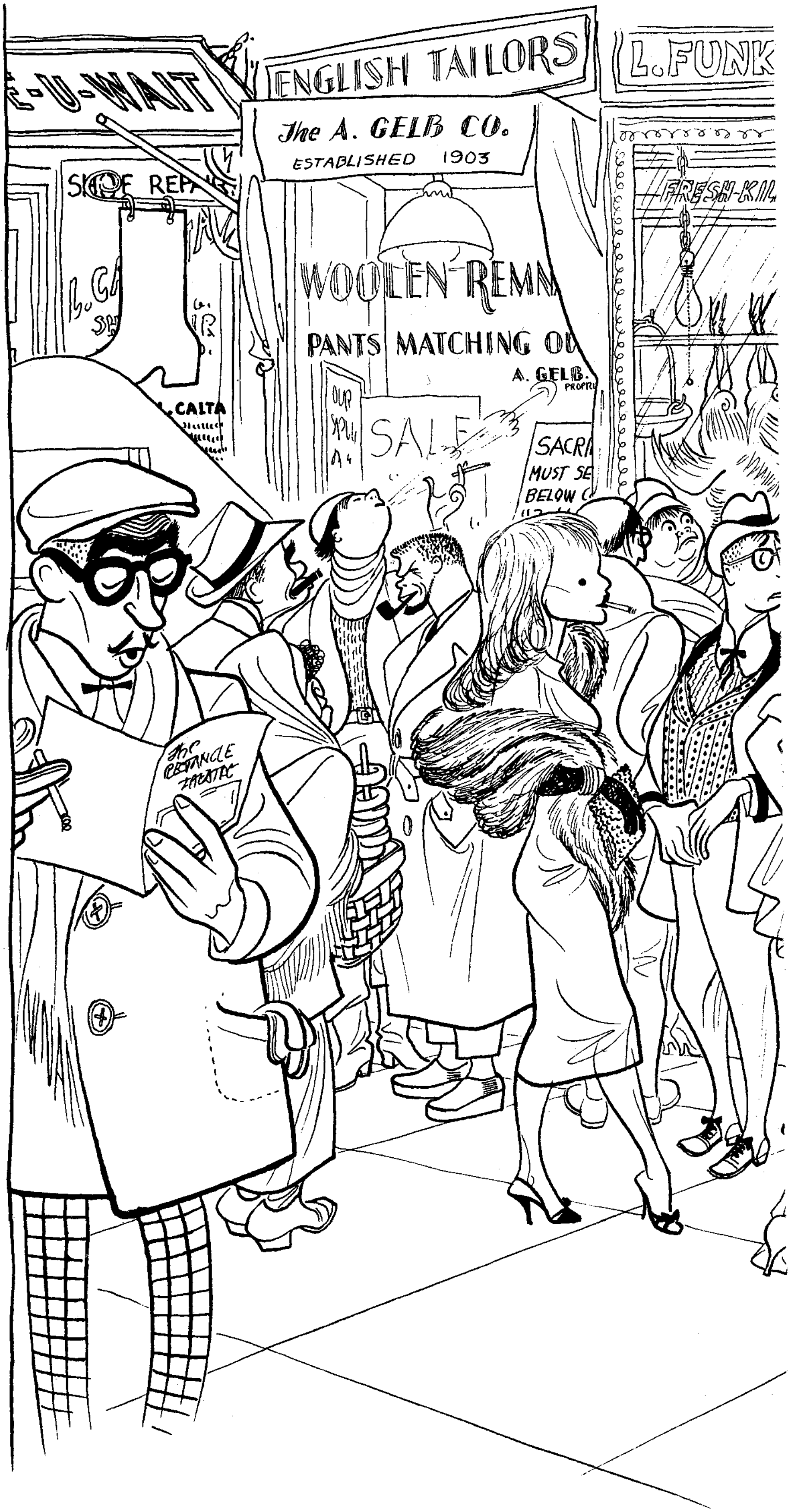
We passed Neko Harbor, and moved toward a small peninsula. Two-foot waves were at my back, pushing me. The current was growing stronger, moving at about one knot. My normal speed was just over two knots, so when we turned around my speed would be halved. I knew we couldn't go much farther in this direction or I would never make it back. Barry and the crew signalled to me with two fingers—I had been swimming for twenty minutes. My normal mile time was between twenty-two and twenty-three minutes, and I was swimming much faster than I usually did. We started to cross a small glacial bay that was



"I told the cook I would prefer that she use some kind of artificial blackbird substitute."

intersected by another inlet. I felt an even stronger current, moving at nearly two knots, hitting me at a right angle. If I continued forward, I wouldn't be able to make it back to the beach at Neko Harbor. I promptly turned around and started racing for the beach. For the first time during the swim, I felt strong and pulled harder, feeling the delayed pressure of my hands against the water. I tasted the water, which was very sweet, with just a hint of salt, probably because there was so much glacial melt. Barry held up his index finger and signalled one mile. The crew cheered, and I began thinking about continuing—maybe I could swim another half mile; my head and core felt warm. But the longer I stayed in the water, the deeper the cold would penetrate, and the harder it would be to get warm again. Two hundred yards from shore, a flock of chinstrap penguins, standing on shore, started jumping into the water. They swam to within ten feet of me, and porpoised beside me. I could see their black eyes, see their beaks enter the water first, then their backs arching, and their feet pushing the water back. They must have been swimming at more than ten miles an hour.

A few minutes later, a crew member jumped into waist-deep water to help me adjust to the change in blood pressure when I made the transition from swimming to standing. On the shore, the crew embraced me, and I thought, We did it! I had been in the water for twenty-five minutes. The crew immediately helped me get into a Zodiac so that we could return to the Orlova, where I would warm up. Back on board, Eremin told me that I had swum 1.06 nautical miles—1.22 miles. My temperature was down to 95.5 degrees, and I was shivering violently. After the three doctors helped me dress, I stood up and the doctors and other crew members hugged me. Fifteen minutes later, my temperature was up to ninety-six degrees, and after thirty minutes it was 96.8. Then I went into the cabin and took a long hot shower. I couldn't endure the cold like a penguin or a seal or a whale, but, having entered their world for a brief time, I had been able to experience something extraordinarily beautiful and harsh. ♦



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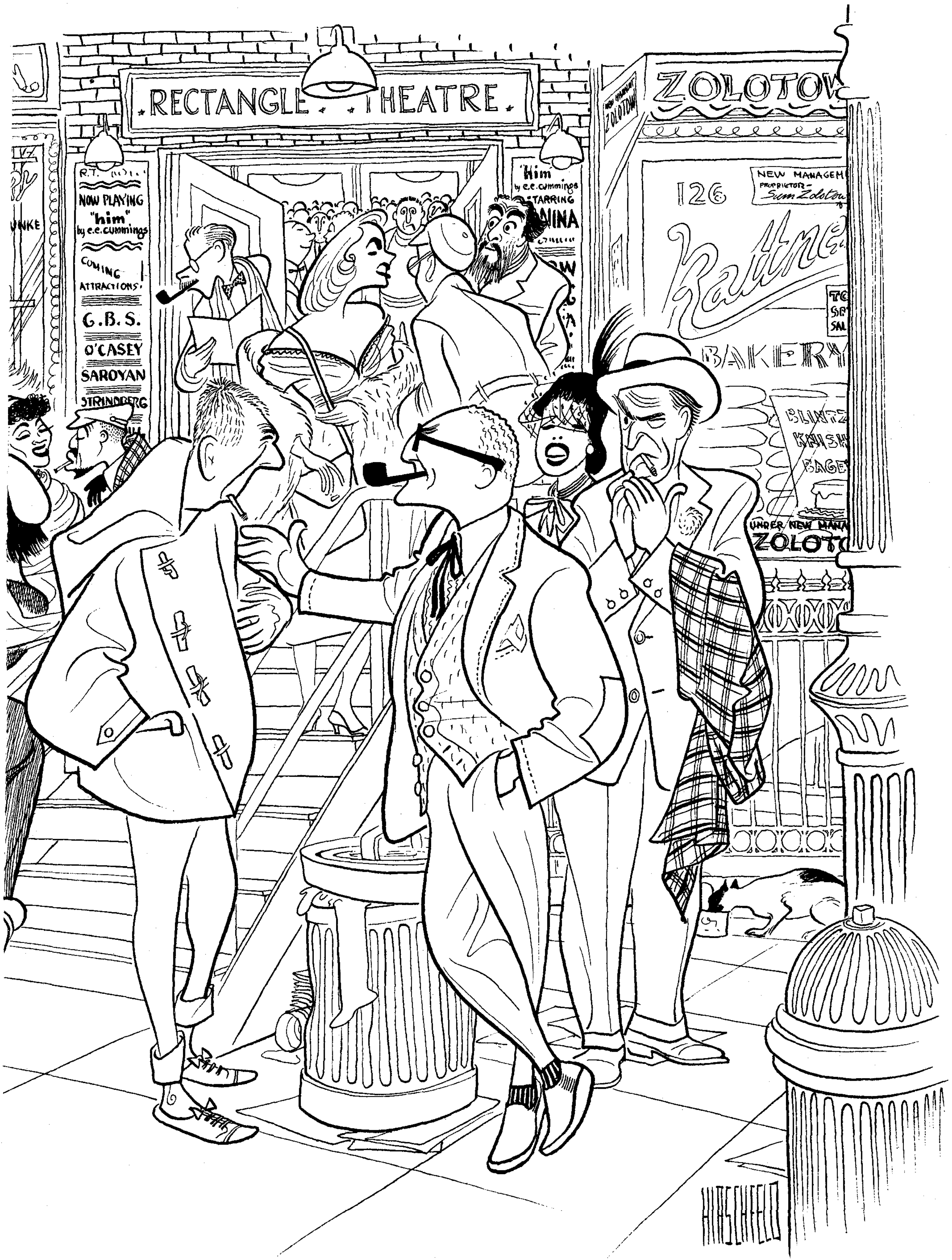
POSTSCRIPT *Al Hirschfeld, the illustrator who caricatured eight decades of celebriti*
the makers of celebrity: in this drawing from 1956, the showgoers include the Times dr

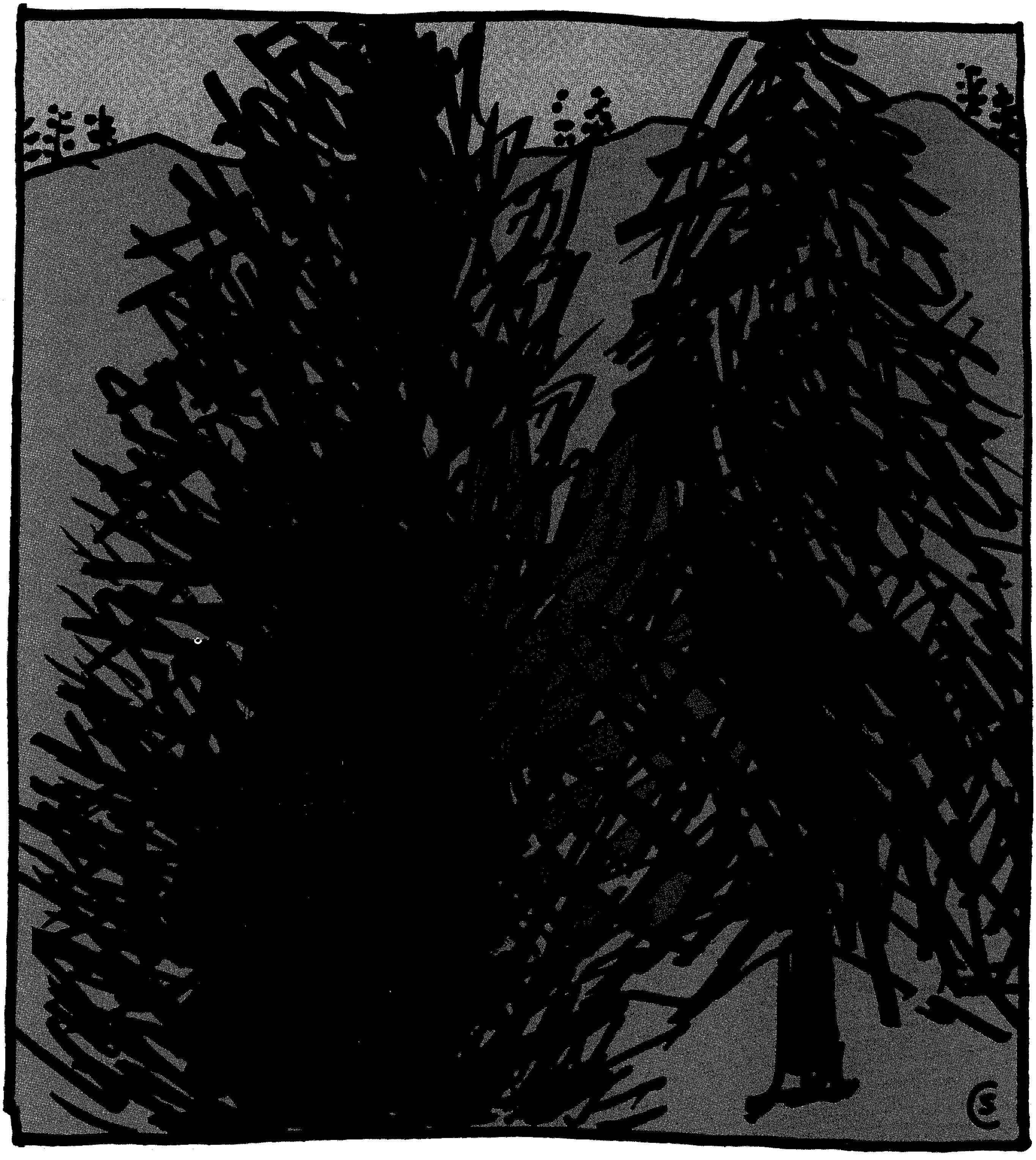

RECTANGLE THEATRE
ZOLOTOW
R.T.
NOW PLAYING "him" by e.e.cummings
COMING ATTRACTIONS
G.B.S.
O'CASEY
SAROYAN
STRINDBERG
"Him" by e.e.cummings STARRING NINA
126
NEW MANAGEM
PROPRIETOR – Sam Zolotow
Rattner
BAKERY
BLINTZ
KNISH
BAGE
UNDER NEW MANA
ZOLOT
HIRSCHFELD

George Gershwin to Julia Roberts—died last week, at the age of ninety-nine. Hirschfeld's iconic line drawings also gently satirized cs Brooks Atkinson, Arthur Gelb, and Sam Zolotow, and Hirschfeld himself—the bearded man at the theatre door.

FICTION

THE HIGH DIVIDE

BY CHARLES D'AMBROSIO



At the Home I'd get up early, when the Sisters were still asleep, and head to the ancient Chinese man's store. The ancient Chinese man was a brown, knotted, shrivelled man who looked like a chunk of gingerroot and ran one of those tiny stores that sell grapefruits, wine, and toilet paper, and no one can ever figure out how they survive. But he survived, he figured it out. His ancient Chinese wife was a little twig of a woman who sat in a chair and never said a word. He spoke only enough English to conduct business, to say hello and goodbye, to make change, although every morning, when I came for my grapefruit, I tried to teach him some useful vocabulary.

I came out of the gray drizzle through the glass door with the old Fishback Appliance Repair sign still stencilled on it, a copper cowbell clanging above me, and the store was cold, the lights weren't even on. I went to the bin and picked through the grapefruits and found one that wasn't bad, a yellow ball, soft and square from sitting too long in the box, and then I went to the counter. The Chinese man wasn't there. His tiny branchlike wife was sitting in her chair, all bent up. I searched my pockets for show, knowing all along that I'd be a little short. I came up with twenty-seven cents, half a paper clip, a pen cap, and a ball of blue lint. I put the money in her hand and she stared at it. By the lonesome sound my nickels and pennies made when she sorted them into their slots I also knew that the till was empty.

I looked behind her through the beaded curtain to the small apartment behind the shop. Next to the kitchen sink was an apple with a bite out of it, the bite turned brown like an old laugh.

I held my grapefruit, tossed it up in the air, caught it.

Where is he? I asked.

She was chewing on a slice of ginger and offered me a piece, which I accepted. In the morning, they chewed ginger instead of drinking coffee.

Husband? I said.

She blinked and spat on the floor. *Meiyou xiwang*, she said. *Meiyou xiwang.*

She folded her hands, tangling the tiny brown roots together. *Meiyou xiwang*, she said, touching her heart, and sending her hands flying apart. Her singsong voice beat an echo against the bare walls. Her hands flapped like a bat. I shook my head. *Meiyou xiwang*, she insisted. Huh? I said, but I knew we could go on forever not making any sense. She hugged herself, like she was cold. I didn't know what to say. She'd travelled all this way, she'd left China and crossed the ocean and come to Bremerton and opened a little store and put grapefruit in the bins and Mogen David on the shelves, but she'd gone too far, because now she couldn't tell anybody what was happening to her anymore.

I had two projects at the Home. I was reading the encyclopedia, working through the whole circle of learning available to man, as the introduction said. I'd started with Ignatius Loyola, because I'm named after him, and the Inquisition, and this led me right into the topic of torture.

My other project involved learning Latin so I could be an altar boy. I got the idea one morning at Sacred Heart while I was staring at the cold altar and the Cross and winking at the nailed-up Christ to see if he'd wink back. Our priest said that he didn't go for the vernacular because it was vulgar. If you were God Eternal, he said, would you want to listen to such yowling? He said that everything in the Church was a sign for something else, and a priest was a man who knew all the signs, but an altar boy knew a few of them, too. I looked around the sanctuary. With the snowy marble slab of altar, the gilt dome of the tabernacle and its tiny doors, the chalices and cruets, the fresh-cut flowers, the sparkling candlelight, the sanctuary was like a foreign country, and if I knew the language I could go there.

Several times I read the Missal as far as the Minor Elevation, the part of the Mass just after you pray for the dead. *Per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen.* World without end. Amen. But I was trying to learn Latin with phonetics—the Missal was Latin on one side, English on the other—and, needless to say, my comprehension was zero, and I was always finding myself back at the beginning, starting over. *Per omnia saecula saeculorum, amen!*

Most of our schoolwork focussed on how to get into Heaven. Sister Eulalia, the catechism nun, taught us about sin and the opportunities for salvation. She was a short, wide old woman with thick glasses and blue eyes that drifted behind them like tropical fish. She kept calling Jesus the Holy Victim and the Word Made Flesh and the Unspotted Sacrifice. She said that sacrifice didn't mean to kill but to make holy. We are made in the image of God's great mystery but through our ignorance and despair our vision is clouded. Salvation, she told us, is our presence in a bright light where we at last become the perfect image and reflection of our Creator.

We saw a slide show on the scapular. A boy was riding by a gas station on his bicycle. A man was pumping gas and a family was waiting in a car. Then the gas station was blowing up and the boy was flying through the air. Everybody died but the boy, who was wearing his scapular. Sister Eulalia passed around blank order forms and said to fill them out and bring $2.50 if you thought it was prudent to have a scapular for yourself. I'd spent all my money on grapefruits, though.

At night, in bed, I practiced my prayers. We had to memorize so many at the Home: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Faith, of Hope, of Love, of Contrition. Praying either put me to sleep or made me think of girls. Once, I passed a girl a note during class and Sister Josephine, the discipline nun, intercepted it and said someone my age doesn't know the least thing about love and shouldn't use that word the way I did. That kind of love is special, she said. It's a rare gift from God, it's the consummation of a union, and it's certainly nothing for children. Sister Josephine called it The Marriage Act. It's embarrassing for me to admit, but she made me cry, she was yelling so much. I never sent another note. Still, I attached a vague feeling of hope to different girls, a feeling of, I don't know, of whatever, that came out, some nights, when I said prayers.

We had to learn the prayers because we prayed for everything: we prayed for food, we prayed for sleep, we prayed for new basketballs. Three times a day, Sister Catherine, the food nun, took us to the church cafeteria for our meals. Vol-

SEYMOUR CHWAST

unteer ladies served us—they were all old and kind and had science-fiction hair, clouds of blue gas, burning white-hot rocket fuel, explosions of atomic frizz. I loved the endless stacks of white bread and the cold slabs of butter. When the nuns said I was underfoot, I went downstairs and studied the encyclopedias or read Latin or went outside and shot buses with my pump gun. Buses passed the Home every twenty-six minutes. I built up my arm pitching rocks at a tree until a circle of pulpy white wood was exposed in the bark. One afternoon I planted a sunflower in a milk carton.

I longed to go somewhere but there wasn't anywhere good that I knew of. Then one day I found the public-school yard.

What're you doing here, you stupid shit? asked one kid, a pudgy boy with skin like a baby.

He and some other boys pushed around me in a circle.

The pudge said, Who are you?

When I didn't answer, he said, You're one of those orphan bastards, right?

The boys crowded in closer and I was afraid to speak. People could tell you were from the Home by your haircut. We were all shaved up like the Dalai Lama.

Finally, I smiled and mumbled, If you say so.

What? the pudge said. I didn't hear you.

The circle of boys cinched like a knot. Their looming heads were way up in the sky.

Yeah, I said.

After that I sat below the monkey bars and chewed a butter sandwich and watched pudge-boy and his gang over by the water fountain with some girls and I knew I was going to have to kick his ass sooner or later. Everything else was new and strange but this seemed predictable and something I could rely on.

That spring the pudge had the nerve to try out for baseball. He wore brand-new cleats and threw like a fem and his mitt, also brand-new, very orange and stiff, wouldn't close. He might as well have been standing in right field with a piece of toast. He dropped everything.

The second day of practice, we had an intrasquad game and I nailed him three times. I just chose places on his fat body and threw the ball at them. Eventually, pudge-boy was afraid to stand in the batter's box. The coach thought I had a control problem but I didn't. My control was perfect.

I whiffed nine guys and made the team and the pudge was cut. He walked away, crying. I ran down the hill and jumped on his back. I hit him in the face and the neck and beat on his ear over and over. You hear that? I shouted. You hear that, you fat fucker? Now that I had him alone I was insane. The pudge rolled away on the grass, holding his ear. Blood was coming out. He was bawling, and I hawked a gob of spit right into his black, wailing mouth and said, You bastard.

That night, I was asleep with the encyclopedia pitched like a tent over my nose when Sister Celestine, the head nun, came in.

Why weren't you at dinner?

I could hear the polished rocks of Sister Celestine's rosary rattling as she worried them between her fingers.

She pulled the encyclopedia off my head.

Won't you talk? Sister said.

She tucked a dry, stray shaft of hair back beneath her habit. Maybe you'd feel more comfortable making a confession?

I picked at the fuzzballs on my blanket.

I just got off the phone with that boy's mother, she said.

She touched a cut on my lip and took a deep breath. She said you called him a name. Do you know what that name means?

I shook my head.

She took off her scapular and put it

TO MY FRIEND BORN BLIND

You told me your blindness is not seeing
even the shades of black called darkness.
You felt useless as a mirror until you made a poem
useful as a dog with bells around its neck.
Sometimes you wake to the wind moving through different trees.
A child, you loved to touch your mother's face,
you wished the world were ocean,
you could hear, smell, and taste, knew that it was blue.
Trees had a smell you called green, apples red.
How could the flag be red-white-and-blue?
You laugh when I tell you "Drink to me only with thine eyes"
is a love song, that some who see
only make love in the dark. You wish you could see as a bat.
Mozart you say is the great equalizer, the truest democrat,
you always preferred a dog to a cane.
When in Braille you first read "The disciples asked,
Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"
Jesus answering, "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents,
but that the works of God should be revealed in him . . . .
and he spat on the ground and healed the man
with his spit and mud—”you waited awhile, then read on.
Blind in dreams, you touch, taste, smell, and hear—
see nothing, nightmares like crowds are the more terrible
because you never see what terrifies you.
Since childhood it was an act of faith
to believe the sun and moon were in the sky,
it pleased you the sun is a fire the sighted cannot look into . . .
It is late. As always you, my imaginary friend,
take me by the hand and lead me to bed.

—*Stanley Moss*

around my neck. Two small pieces of brown wool hung on a cord, one in back, the other in front.

I rubbed the wool between my finger and thumb.

It's not magic, she said.

No?

More like a sign, she said, that helps guide people—she paused—like us. When you pray to it you never say Amen, because the prayer is continuous. It doesn't have an end. Before I received my calling, she said, I used to be a lot like you. I felt trapped. It was like I lived in a dark little corner of my own mind. She sighed. Ignatius, do you know what the opposite of love is?

Hate, I said.

Despair, Sister said. Despair is the opposite of love.

When the pudge came to the yard, he was obviously beat up and everybody wanted to know what happened. Before I could say anything, he came charging across the lot and said, Truce, truce. We shook hands and sat under the monkey bars, which had become my private territory.

I thought Catholics were pansies, he said.

Ignatius Loyola was a warrior, I said.

That's a weird name, the pudge said. My name's Donny.

Ignatius, I told him.

I'm sorry I called you a bastard, Donny said. He peeled a strip of red rubber off his tennis shoe and stretched and snapped it in the air. Then he put it in his mouth and chewed on it.

You should meet my dad, he said.

My dad used to race pigeons, I said. He had about a hundred of them.

Donny looked impressed. How do you race pigeons? he asked.

You just drive out to the country and let them go—they always find their way back to the coop. You can use pigeons to send messages.

My dad ate a pigeon once, Donny said. In France.

Donny told me about the Eurekan Territory, which was something he'd made up on summer vacation. The Eurekan Territory came from Eureka, California, where he had relatives he didn't like. All they did was drink greyhounds, he said, and talk about people you didn't know. They were always slapping their knees and saying Gosh, isn't that funny? when nothing was funny.

Donny wasn't a Catholic but I let him wear my scapular, which he kept on calling a spatula.

You should come over to our house, Donny said. It's big. My dad rakes it in.

I said, You want to go see my dad?

Donny looked at me. Where? he said.

What do you mean, where?

Isn't he dead?

Follow me, I said.

St. Jude's Hospital was a huge old brick building. A hurricane fence caged in a patio that was scattered with benches and garbage cans. We walked around the fence, plucking the cold wires with our fingers.

My dad was sitting on a bench with a loaf of bread and an orange. He wore a paper nightgown with snaps in the back. His eyes were like blown fuses, and dry white yuck made a crust around his mouth. Wind ruffled his hair. It was too cold to be outside in a paper outfit.

Don't you want a sweater? I said.

I climbed up the chain-link fence.

This is my friend Donny, I said. Donny, this is my dad, Tony Banner.

Dad was barefoot on one foot and wore a foam-rubber slipper on the other. He grabbed the fence and the links shivered. He looked out west, toward the Olympic Mountains, and we looked, too. It was getting dark.

Hey, Dad?

What?

He dropped a piece of bread through the fence, and a couple of cooing pigeons bobbed along the gutter and fought each other for it. They were ugly pigeons, dirty like a sidewalk. They were right under me and Donny's feet. I kicked one in the head. It fell over, and beat the dirt with its wings.

I'm learning quite a lot of prayers at school, I said.

That got him to laugh. The cuts on his hands were healing. That last week at our house he emptied all the soup cans in the garage and kept the rusty nails in his pockets. One morning for breakfast he served me a bowl of nails with milk and then squeezed a fistful of them in his hand until blood came

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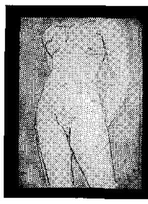

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out. He kept saying with his voice very loud and fast, I got the nails, I got the nails right here, boy—where's my cross, eh? Now he was gentle. He pushed bread through the fence until the loaf was gone and the pigeons flew away, except the one I'd kicked.

I gotta go home and eat, Donny said to me.

Donny's gotta go home and eat, I told my dad, translating for him. I've got to go eat, too.

I turned around once, real quick, and he was gripping the fence, looking off nowhere, then Donny and I crawled through a hole in the hedge.

Donny's dad asked us, Who wants to get the hell out of here? Who wants to go hiking in the Olympics? I'd spent most of my summer at Donny's house, so I knew his parents. Mrs. Cheetam was a beautiful woman with silver-and-gold hair. Mr. Cheetam was a travelling salesman and wasn't home much but it was true, he raked it in. They bought Donny everything. Donny told me he had a sister who died of leukemia. He played me a cassette of her last farewell. Near the end of the tape she said, Donny? I love you, remember that. I want you to know that wherever I am, and wherever you are, I'll be watching. I'll be with you always. I love you. Do you hear me? Donny?

When she said that—I love you. Do you hear me? Donny?—I got a lonely sort of chill.

We're now leaving the Eurekan Territory! Donny said as we drove away, and I said, That's right. Goodbye, Eurekan Territory!

Mr. Cheetam listened to different tapes from a big collection he kept in a suitcase. They were old radio shows, and one I liked was called "The Shadow": Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? Mr. Cheetam and Donny knew all the words and talked right along with the tapes. The Shadow knows, they said, ha ha ha!

Later Donny woke up and asked, Where are we? Mr. Cheetam said, You see that river there, Donny? That's the Quinault River, and we're going to hike up along what's called the High Divide, and when we get to the top we'll be at the source of that river. You'll be able to skip right over it, he said, so remember how big it is now. Donny asked, What if we see the Sasquatch? I said we'd be famous, if we captured it. Or took a picture, Donny said. But I don't want to see it, he added. We parked at the ranger station and signed in. It was silent and we could hear our feet crunching the gravel. We cinched up our pack straps and looked at each other. This is it, Mr. Cheetam said. He looked up the trail. This is where we separate the men from the boys.

After about an hour, we cut off the main path and headed toward the river. This is where I buried my dad, Mr. Cheetam explained. I always visit once a year. Right beside the river was a tree, hanging over the water and shadowing everything. Initials were carved in the tree on the side facing the river. B.C. is Billy Cheetam, Donny said. That's my grandpa. Is he under the tree? I asked. No, no, Mr. Cheetam laughed. He was cremated and I scattered his ashes in the river. But this is the spot, he said. The river was deep and wide at that point. Mr. Cheetam asked if he and Donny could be alone to think and remember and I hiked back out to the main trail. I sat against a fallen log until Donny came back. He talks to him, Donny said. What's he say? I asked, but Donny didn't know.

Our first camp was disappointing because we could hear Boy Scouts hooting and farting around, a troop of about sixty in green uniforms with red or yellow hankies around their necks. It was like the Army, with pup tents everywhere. Mr. Cheetam said not to worry, higher up there won't be any Scouts.

We found wood and lit a campfire and made dinner—beef Stroganoff—and I sopped up all the gravy with my fingers. We washed the pots and pans with pebbles and sand in the river. Mr. Cheetam drank whiskey from a silver flask, wiping his lips and saying, Aaahhh, this is living!

The Boy Scouts sounded off with taps. Donny and I shared a smokewood stogie—a kind of gray stick you could smoke—and when it was quiet Mr. Cheetam cupped his hands around his mouth and moaned, Who stole my

Golden Arm? Whooooo stoooole myyyy Goool-den Aaaarm? You could hear his voice echoing in the forest. Whoo stooole my Gooolden Aaarm? You did! Mr. Cheetam shouted, grabbing Donny. We crawled into our tents and I started laughing and Donny got hysterical, too. Mr. Cheetam had a different tent and told us to shut up.

Donny whispered how he hated the Japs and never wanted to be captured by them—they knew how to make you talk. I told him about the Inquisition and all the tortures they'd invented for getting confessions.

They had this one thing called the press, I said. If you were accused of a crime and didn't make a plea, the King ordered you to lie down. Then he piled rocks on you until you confessed the truth or got crushed.

How big were the rocks? Donny asked.

I don't know.

What if you had thirty—what if you had a hundred—no, wait, what if you had a thousand rocks on you and then you decided to tell the truth?

You could, I said. But if you said you *didn't* do anything, the King didn't want to hear that, and he'd just go ahead with another rock, until you admitted you *did* do it.

Donny hesitated, and I thought I understood.

I know, I said. *I know.*

At the next camp, only two people were around, a man and a woman, who were sitting naked on a rock in the river when we first arrived, but kept to themselves afterward. Donny and Mr. Cheetam fished for a while but quit after Donny's hook got caught in the trees too many times. Mr. Cheetam said, Don't worry about it, Donny. It's no good down here. Higher up the water's colder and we'll catch tons of rainbows, maybe some Dolly Varden.

We ate a great meal of dehydrated chicken tetrazzini and pilot biscuits and chocolate for dessert. Donny and I shared more smokewood. Now and then we added sticks to the fire and the light breathed out and made a circle around us. I love getting away from it all, Mr. Cheetam said.

He tipped back his flask and in the bright curved silver I could see the fire flaming up.

Once upon a time, Mr. Cheetam said, there was a boy and girl who were very much in love.

Where was this? Donny asked.

Oh, Mr. Cheetam said, it doesn't matter, does it? Love's the same everywhere you go, so let's just make up a place.

How about the Eurekan Territory? I said.

O.K., Mr. Cheetam said. The Eurekan Territory, that's where they were in love. It was a small place, and everybody knew everybody else, so eventually people figured out this boy and girl had a thing going. You know what a thing is, right?

Donny said he did.

Good for you, Mr. Cheetam said. Well, this thing was frowned on by everyone. People took different sides, against the boy, or against the girl, everybody blaming everybody else. But the boy and girl were madly in love and you can't stop love, not when it's the real thing.

He went to his pack and pulled out a big bottle and refilled his flask. When he came back he said, You know what that's like, to have a real thing?

Donny said, Yeah, I know.

I mean really real, Mr. Cheetam said.

How real? I said.

Mr. Cheetam ignored me. To hell with what anybody thinks, these kids, these lovers, said. So one night the boy meets the girl on the edge of town and they drive up a dark winding road to a lover's leap. They can see everything from up there, but they're not looking. No siree, Bob. The boy and the girl sit in the car, spooning, as we used to call it back in the day—making out, and listening to love songs on the radio, until one of the songs is interrupted by a special bulletin. A prisoner has escaped!

Does the prisoner have hooks instead of hands? I asked.

Yeah, Mr. Cheetam said, that's the guy.

How'd you know? Donny asked.

I knew because the story wasn't true. The girl hears something outside, and the boy says, Oh, baby baby, don't worry, we're way up here above everything, we're safe. The boy tries to get at the girl, and the girl keeps hearing something outside. Eventually it's no fun, and they go home. When the boy opens the door for the girl to drop her out he finds a hook clawing and banging at the door handle, just clinging there, ripped right off the prisoner's arm.

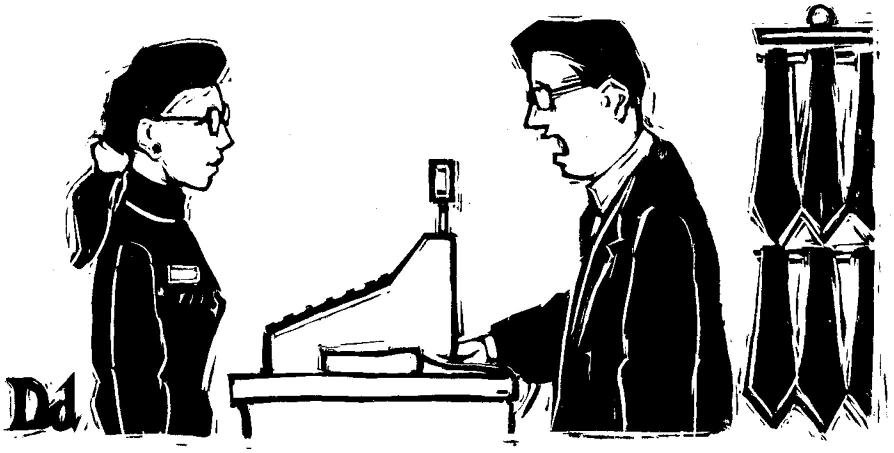
Mr. Cheetam didn't scare me, but Donny was scared.

We were quiet for a minute, and then I told them about when my dad was driving in his car. The other car came out of nowhere, I said. And my dad was hanging half out the door. His foot was stuck under the clutch and his head was banging on the road. He was dragged about two hundred feet. He was in the hospital for a month. My mom died.

No one said anything, so I added, That's a true life story.

You don't think mine was? Mr. Cheetam asked. He looked at me strangely and winked.

Well, I said, yeah, I do. I know it



"I'm looking for a tie that retracts a statement."

is. I heard about those lovers before.

Mr. Cheetam stood up, stretched, and fell down. Donny and I looked at each other, then we got in our sleeping bags.

Your dad sure enjoys whiskey, I said.

In the middle of the night, Donny said, Hey, you hear that?

Come off it, I said.

I swear I heard something.

There's nothing out there, I said, but Donny went over to sleep in his dad's tent anyway.

We reached a sign that pointed different ways: the High Divide and the Low Divide. We took the high, up and up. There were fewer trees, and we climbed on loose rock called scree, and the air was thinner. Donny had an ugly blister on his heel and complained, and Mr. Cheetam got impatient with him. Just pull yourself up and get going, he said. Don't fall behind.

Finally we crossed a field full of pink and yellow wildflowers, and at the far end, where the path ended, was a lake. The surface was perfectly clear and placid and we could see ourselves.

Here we are, Mr. Cheetam said.

Skinny-dipping, Donny said.

First things first, girls, Mr. Cheetam said, so we hopped to, setting up camp and scrounging enough wood for the night.

Donny and I stripped naked and jumped off the cliffs. No one else was around but when we swam and shouted and splashed our voices bounced back and forth off the rocks. Ricochet, we yelled. We dove and dove. Then we lay on a hot flat rock. I noticed that Donny had hair on his balls and he probably noticed so did I. You want to smoke a stogerooni? Donny asked. Nah, later, I said. We were stretched out and quiet: blue sky, yellow sun, white mountain—everything was perfect but Donny got antsy doing nothing for so long and took another dip. He came up fast and said, A fish! I saw a fish! And he got his fishing pole and caught a rainbow, like pulling a prayer from the water.

Good work, Donny, Mr. Cheetam said.

The fish wasn't all the way dead yet and Mr. Cheetam had to slap its head against a rock. Blood came out the eyes. The knife blade sank into the skin with a ripping sound. What do we do with the guts? I asked. Toss 'em in the lake, Mr. Cheetam said. We don't want any animals coming into camp. Bears? Donny said. It's not impossible, Mr. Cheetam said, but not likely, either. Maybe the Sasquatch, Donny said. Mr. Cheetam said to shut up about that damned Sasquatch. It's time you grow up, he said, shaking Donny's arm. Jesus, Donny said, rubbing himself.

Mr. Cheetam wrapped the fillets in foil and set them on the fire. It was soft out now, not dark but not light, either. Our shadows were weak around the fire, and Mt. Olympus was tinged pink and purple, and the wind died down.

Hey, I said, what about the Quinault?

Yeah, the Quinault! Donny said. You said I'd get to walk across it.

Oh crap, what was I thinking? Mr. Cheetam asked himself. You already did and I forgot, God damn it!

We ran back through the darkening wildflowers. We found a little stream about a foot wide and three inches deep that you would never think was a river but it was. There's your mighty Quinault, Donny, Mr. Cheetam said. Donny asked if we built a dam would the river dry up below and Mr. Cheetam laughed, saying, No, I'm afraid it doesn't work that way. We bent down and drank and splashed our faces in the water. We listened to the little river, trickling in a whisper. It was almost like nothing.

The fish was all burned to hell when we got back to camp. Donny was upset and kept whining. I'm sorry, Mr. Cheetam said, but things happen. What can I say? Then he offered, Tomorrow? You want to stay another day? Donny looked at me, then said, Stay! Stay! O.K., Mr. Cheetam said, I think we've got everything we need—plenty of provisions—and we'll catch some more fish.

After dinner, Mr. Cheetam drew out his flask again. His face was like my dad's had been in the last days, rough and black. One night toward the end I'd found him, my dad, in our broom closet. He had all his Bob Dylan records out and was writing new lyrics on them with a nail. Other things happened that I prefer to keep to myself. All week his loud voice was like the echo of thoughts he'd had a long time ago. Then one morning at the very end I heard him calling me in the rain. He was on top of our house in boxer shorts, yelling. Our neighbor tried to drive him off the roof by throwing a pot of geraniums at him. My dad started ripping apart the chimney and pitching bricks down on me and everybody else on the front lawn. We had to call the authorities. For a while he thought he was Jesus in a hospital called St. Judas, but it was really St. Jude's and my dad, of course, wasn't Jesus. The same people who took him to the hospital brought me to the Home. I hadn't eaten in three days.

Nearby we saw field mice hopping around, and Mr. Cheetam said that we'd better keep our packs inside the tents tonight. He hooked his arm around Donny's neck and said, How'd you like to go to California?

Not Eureka, Donny said.

No, Mr. Cheetam said, L.A.

Donny said he didn't know anything about L.A. Mr. Cheetam fussed with the fire, arranging the coals. When that goes out that's it until morning, he said. He tipped back the flask. Then he capped it and said, That's it for that, too. He stretched and groaned and walked out where the firelight failed. I heard him whistling in the dark.

Son? Mr. Cheetam said.

What? Donny asked.

Come on over here a minute, Mr. Cheetam said.

They were in the shadows. I heard Donny say, What does Mom think?

That's the thing, Mr. Cheetam said. Your mother would stay.

I don't know, Donny said. How long would we be gone?

Donald, Mr. Cheetam said, don't be stupid. We're divorcing, your mom and I. You see, we won't come back—we'll live in a brand-new house there.

Donny begged, But why?

Donald, come on. You see how things are.

The two of them were quiet and staring ahead, like their next thoughts might fall out of the sky.

What can I say? Mr. Cheetam said.

Nothing, Donny said.

I love you, Donald. You know that.

I crawled inside our tent. A little while later, Donny got in his bag, buried down inside. He was crying and choking. I whispered, Donny, hey, hey Donny? Donny? I think I hear something out there. Do you hear it? Let's go look! I hugged my arm around him and he started jerking in his bag and sat up and cried to me, Here's your stupid spatula! Then he crossed over into Mr. Cheetam's tent but kept crying and begging even louder for no divorce.

Look, I heard Mr. Cheetam say, after your sister died— His voice fell apart. That's too easy, he said. I've met someone else. He was quiet a minute. That's the truth.

I thought the crying would go on forever, but eventually Donny must have fallen asleep.

I turned over and over in my sleeping bag, and then I put on Sister Celestine's scapular and grabbed the flashlight and crawled out of the tent. The fire made a hiss and I kicked the last few embers around in the bed of ash. Mr. Cheetam snorted in his sleep and I heard Donny say, Dad? and Mr. Cheetam say, What? but there was nothing after that, even though I stood outside their tent a long time, listening.

I aimed my flashlight ahead to the flat rock rim of the lake and followed the narrow beam up there. I sat, dangling my feet, and snapped off the light. I think I was feeling sorry for myself. Suddenly it felt like we'd been gone for ages. Was it Sunday? I gathered up ten rocks for a rosary, to count my prayers. I rattled them in my hands and started the Our Father but my voice was weird. I shook the rocks in my fist like dice. I threw one in the lake, and a little while later I heard the splash. Circles opened out where the stone had vanished. I thought of saying something in Latin but couldn't recall a single word, except amen. I yelled out, A-men! and heard back, Hey-men, hey-men, hey-men, smaller and smaller.

I stretched out on the rock. Sister Celestine's scapular was old, the wool worn soft from handling. Once, at the Home, I had climbed the stairs, six flights up from my room in the basement, to see where she lived. We weren't supposed to go up there. I saw why. Hosiery hung from the water pipes. Candy wrappers were crumpled on the floor. A black habit lay like an empty sack beside the bed. The bed was unmade, and I could see the hollow where Sister Celestine slept. A pale-green blanket and a thin yellow top sheet had been twisted into a tight braid and kicked off the end of the mattress. The only decoration was a black wooden crucifix, nailed on the wall above the bed like a permanent shadow.

I was still lying there when Donny and Mr. Cheetam came running up the rock in their undies. Hey, what's going on? they asked. They said they'd heard me shouting and were afraid I'd got lost or seen something.

Maybe the Sasquatch, Donny said.

God damn it, Donald, there is no such thing, Mr. Cheetam said. That's just a myth.

Oh yeah, Donny said. How do you know?

Don't worry, I said. It was nothing.

You sure? Donny said.

It was nothing, I said. I'm sure.

A wind was blowing and it was a little cold on that rock. Nobody knew what to say.

See out there? Above Mt. Olympus? That green star? Mr. Cheetam said, pointing. We all looked—a vague white shadow, a green light. It's not really a star. That's a planet—that's Venus, Mr. Cheetam said. The goddess of love.

That's just a *myth*, Donny said, looking at his father. Bastard.

I didn't hear you, Mr. Cheetam said. What did you say?

Nothing, Donny said.

Nothing? It didn't sound like nothing to me.

I pitched another rock in the lake, way out there, as far as possible. We all listened. Across the water a circle spread out, wider and wider. Then, shaking with cold, Donny folded his arms around himself and yelled out, Hey, and we heard back, Hey, hey, hey, and then I yelled out, Hey, and even Mr. Cheetam joined in, and we kept hearing back, Hey, hey, hey, like there were millions of us everywhere. ♦

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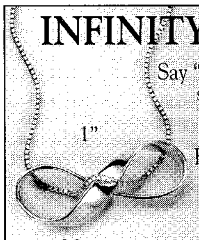

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THE CRITICS

THE THEATRE

PLAYING FOR IMMORTALITY

Sam Mendes's productions shoot for the stars.

BY HILTON ALS

In 2001, the British director Sam Mendes announced the end of his run as artistic director of the Donmar Warehouse, the flashy and successful London theatre he had co-founded nine years earlier. Under Mendes's supervision, the Donmar had been transformed from an unused rehearsal hall for the Royal Shakespeare Company to the focal point of theatrical chic. For the most part, Mendes had staged contemporary plays, ranging from David Mamet's "Glengarry Glen Ross" to David Hare's "The Blue Room," in which Nicole Kidman briefly appeared nude, and David Auburn's "Proof," starring Gwyneth Paltrow. Mendes also directed a tricked-up version of "Cabaret" (more raunch, more drugs, more Weimar), which opened with Alan Cumming in the lead role. (The production is still Willkommen-ing audiences on Broadway.) In short, he established the Donmar as a thinking man's boutique Palace. He mounted plays with enough credibility to draw serious theatregoers, as he appealed to the general public's guilty thrill at seeing stars of a certain pedigree join the footlight parade. There was nothing particularly unusual in this approach. Hollywood-focussed packaging infects Off Broadway, too; think of the Public Theatre's 2001 production of "The Seagull," with Meryl Streep, Natalie Portman, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Christopher Walken, Marcia Gay Harden, Kevin Kline, and others—it was like a DVD with too many features. But Mendes knows, in his post-Peter Brook way, that the play is not the thing; the star is, no matter how ill-equipped he or she may be for the exigencies of the stage. He knows, too, that the theatre nowadays is to movies what jazz is to pop music: it has a certain cachet, but few prefer it to the populist-minded alternative. As Mendes said, after directing two movies—last year's "Road to Perdition" and the trite and antiseptic 1999 "American Beauty"—"Movies live and breathe and walk among us. . . . Theatre lives in the memory, which can be very powerful, but is *not* the same. A movie puts you in the center of the culture. And that's the challenge—the game. You are playing for immortality."

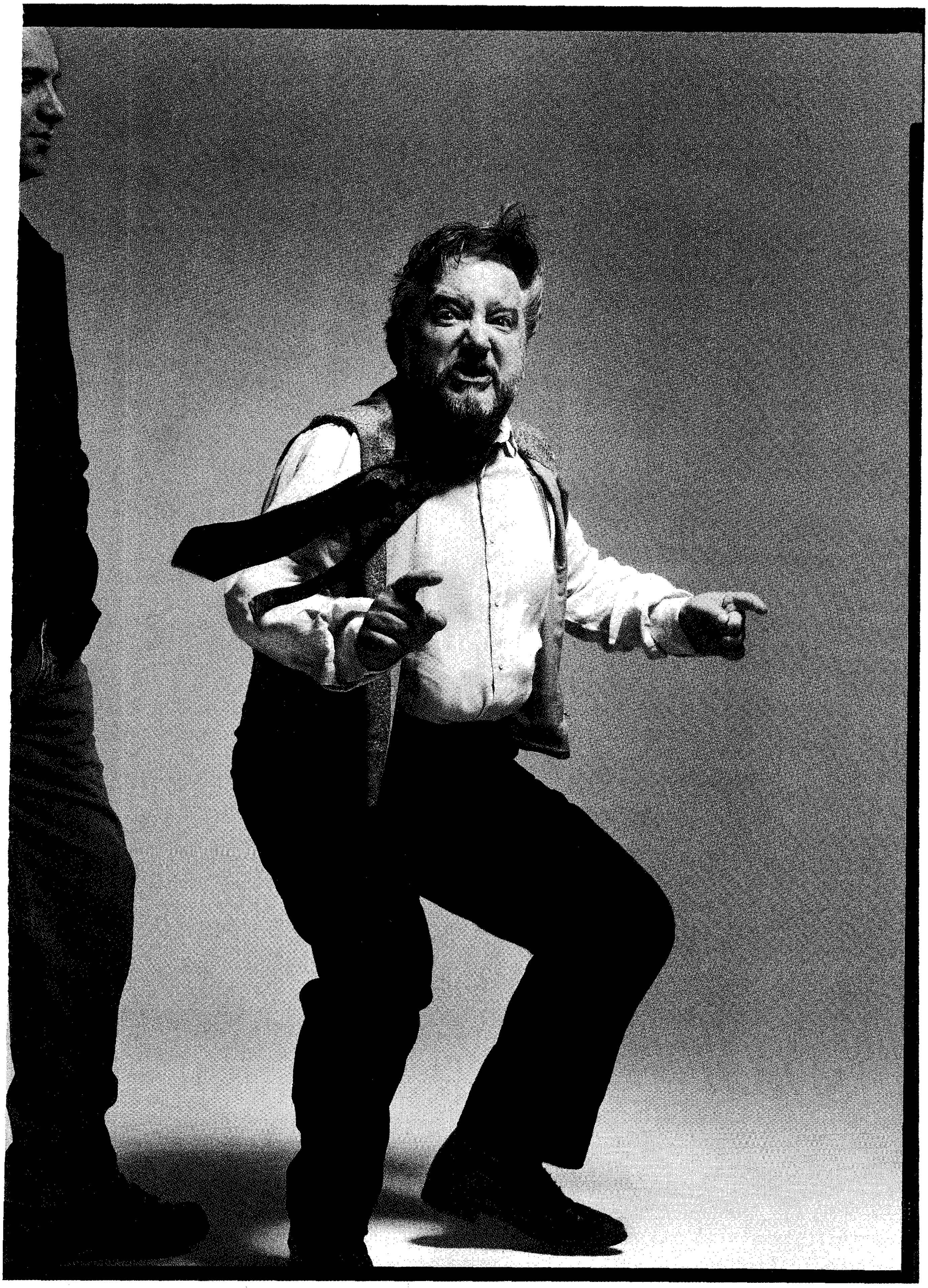
To celebrate his last season at the Donmar, Mendes staged simultaneous productions of Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya" and Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," which are now in repertory at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Harvey Theatre. He chose these shows, he said, because they are "two plays about requited and unrequited love, by two of the greatest playwrights that ever lived, both working at the height of their powers." In fact, "Uncle Vanya," written in 1895 and published in 1897, at roughly the same time that Chekhov wrote "The Seagull," is the least great of his great plays. Louis Malle, in his brilliant film of André Gregory's production of the play, "Vanya on 42nd Street," showed us, perhaps unintentionally, where the holes in the text are.

The play's limitations—instead of soaring, it whines with regret—have mostly to do with Uncle Vanya himself. Vanya (played here by Simon Russell Beale) is running the estate where his late sister's husband, an elderly professor named Serebryakov (David Bradley), has retired, along with his second wife, the young and beautiful Yelena (Helen McCrory). Serebryakov is self-absorbed, and not a little bombastic. An academic without a lectern, he has been left with an audience of one: his daughter, Sonya (Emily Watson), whom he, and nearly everyone else she loves, treats like a weed, a minor nuisance that is part of the landscape. Yet Sonya has a power that the others fail to recognize: she owns the estate they're living on; it was left to her by her late mother, Vanya's sister. In her American stage début, Emily Watson—who made a name for herself in Lars Von Trier's 1996 film, "Breaking the Waves"—plays Sonya as a woman who will not be bowed by grief. Walking on the balls of her feet, taking long, purposeful strides, she pitches her torso forward, like a ship's mast into a storm—the storm being the love Sonya feels for Astrov (the compelling Mark Strong), a local doctor, whom Serebryakov often calls upon for a consultation but never manages to see. In truth, none of the characters in the play want to be cured of what ails them. Not Vanya, of his unrequited love for Yelena. Not Sonya, of her unrequited love for Astrov. Not Astrov, of his nearly unrequited love for Yelena. Not Yelena, of her unrequited love for herself.

Yelena's entrance at the beginning of the play draws our attention to the rather mundane beauty of the set, which was designed by Anthony Ward. On the wall behind a tall sea of grass, the words "O learn to read what silent love hath writ" glow and fade. In the foreground, a samovar rests on a table positioned on worn rugs. It is summer. Yelena has just returned from a walk with her husband

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

Sam Mendes and Simon Russell Beale, New York City, January 8, 2003.



and some neighbors, but she enters alone, stage right, a large white, lacy hat obscuring her face as she silently places a flower on the table, pours herself some tea, and slowly exits, stage left. It's a drag-queen entrance, meant to titillate and delight, and it signals that McCrory's performance will be a series of high notes. Watson—with her perpetually startled expression, high, intelligent forehead, and Claymation lips—is not at ease onstage. She lacks the fearlessness, the vulgarity, and the need that enable an actor to project. McCrory, on the other hand, laps up attention like a beautiful boozehound. Yet she has no real interpretive skills. We know that Yelena gave up her studies at a music conservatory, that she's bored, hates the country, and tyrannizes the men who adore her by withholding her approval, but, beyond that, what is there? McCrory would be better suited, perhaps, to play the wicked Aksinya in an adaptation of Chekhov's short story "In the Ravine" (1900), a narrative that shows how Chekhov's sense of evil deepened along with his talent.

That sense of evil—the depravity that goes hand in hand with self-pity and self-hatred—is what is missing from Simon Russell Beale's performance. Beale, a star of the English theatre and an actor's actor, overdoes it, without ever going far enough. He plays Vanya as a spoiled, unruly child, desperate for attention, stomping his feet, clenching his fists, and despising the world because he never had a chance to be a "Schopenhauer or Dostoyevsky." If Beale had been able to put his star turn aside and concentrate instead on Vanya's spiritual fatigue—his despair at feeling unattractive and trapped—he might have helped us see how we, too, have fallen short of our dreams. Instead, his performance remains histrionic and shallow, intent on impressing.

Fortunately, Wallace Shawn's beautifully muted performance as Vanya can still be seen in "Vanya on 42nd Street." Shawn sounds all the right wrong notes. When he complains, in short, bitter bursts, we are drawn in, torn between revulsion and pity—which is apt, since Malle and Gregory directed "Uncle Vanya" as a fugue. Mendes directs it, instead, as a burlesque. Cherry Morris, as Marina, Sonya's former nanny, acts with camp relish; and when Vanya's mother, Marya (Selina Cadell), grumbles and clucks, we see a babushka-clad Cloris Leachman in a Mel Brooks parody of the Russian Empire—so many Cossacks, so little time. The actors are not much helped by Brian Friel's new translation. At the close of Act II, for instance, Yelena decides to play the piano, and Sonya goes to ask her father if the music will disturb him. Returning, she announces, "He says no!" In the great Eugene K. Bristow translation, the line is "We can't!"—a far more chilling phrase. We can't get on with life, it implies, we can't get on with love, we are too wedded to our own despair. At the end of the play, Serebryakov and Yelena go off to live closer to town, leaving Vanya and Sonya and the others to their banal horror, to the tedium of being alone together. Sonya makes a plea for redemption, for hope and understanding. All we have is one another, she tries to say. But it's too late for us to buy it—from Sonya, or from any of the other brave performers in this flawed production.

Emily Watson plays Viola in Mendes's interpretation of "Twelfth Night," Shakespeare's study of identity and love, gender and fidelity. It's a great part for an actress who is essentially unafraid of her androgyny. (Katharine Hepburn, both the most butch and the most girlish actress imaginable, famously donned tights to play Viola in 1960.) But Watson here is too soft and womanly, too endowed with feminine wiles (Paul Thomas Anderson made good use of this side of her in his astonishing 2002 film "Punch-Drunk Love"), and she lacks the physical courage, the wildness, that Viola should crackle with in order to ingratiate herself with the people of Orsino's kingdom. When Orsino, baffled by his attraction, impulsively kisses Viola, he is confused, but we aren't: what boy wouldn't want to kiss Emily Watson?

W. H. Auden, in his 1954 essay "Music in Shakespeare," said, "I get the impression that Shakespeare wrote the play when he was in no mood for comedy, but in a mood of puritanical aversion to all those pleasing illusions which men cherish. . . . The trouble, to my mind, about 'Twelfth Night' is that Viola and Antonio are strangers to the world which all the other characters inhabit. Viola's love for the Duke, and Antonio's love for Sebastian are much too strong and real." Gary Powell, as Antonio, and Mark Strong, as Orsino, give performances full of the realness that Auden sensed—and so free of the synthetic charm that mars the rest of the production that they seem to be acting in a different play entirely. Powell and Strong come to their parts with a depth that arises less from yearning for the unobtainable—as each of the characters does, in one way or another—than from living with the understanding of a dream that might have been. They are the true stars of the theatre here. With their vulnerability and their strength, they burst out of the tidy staging that frames—and hems in—the rest of the cast.

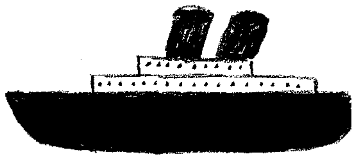
Kathryn Meisle, as Elmire in the Roundabout's new production of Molière's "Tartuffe" (at the American Airlines Theatre, under the direction of Joe Dowling), has the look of a very young Diana Rigg. Her open, intelligent face lets us know that Elmire suffers fools gladly but, at the same time, keeps up her own appealing wit. This is quite an accomplishment, given whom she's married to: Orgon (Brian Bedford), a French aristocrat of good conscience but little sense, who falls for Tartuffe (Henry Goodman), a hypocrite who claims to be in love with God ("Hang up my hairshirt, put my scourge in place") but whose real interest lies in capturing Orgon's money, house, and wife, not necessarily in that order.

Molière's brilliant farce is about trust and the division between what is said in polite society and the craven ways in which desire manifests itself. It's also about faith and self-love. And it's a difficult play to perform: the actors must convey the farcical aspects of the plot while maintaining a naturalness of expression. Bedford, unfortunately, hams it up with all sorts of tics, widening his eyes and sighing loudly in despair when Tartuffe is exposed as a trickster. Goodman, on the other hand, makes his bad character sexy—he is a rogue who takes pleasure in all kinds of flesh. And John Bedford Lloyd plays Elmire's brother, Cléante, with a centered clarity. But it's Meisle who, with her low-key comic relief, makes us forgive the show's otherwise groaning pyrotechnics. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

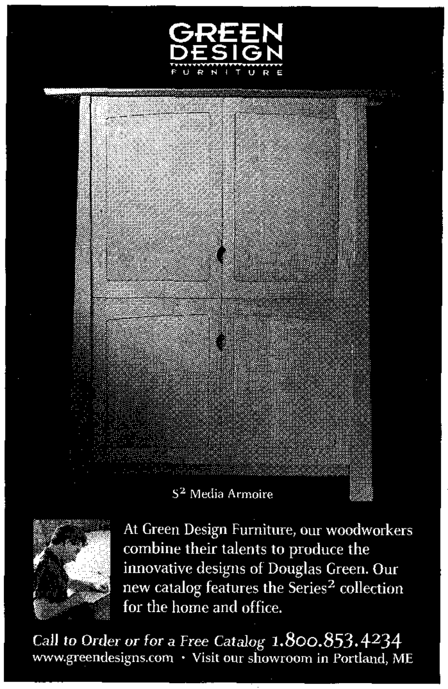
Pattern Recognition, *by William Gibson (Putnam; $25.95).* Almost two decades ago, Gibson's début novel, "Neuromancer," which coined the term "cyberspace," established him as the oracle of postmodern science fiction. His new book, though, is set entirely in the present—specifically, in the aftermath of September 11th. Cayce Pollard is a brand consultant whose father disappeared on September 11th. She becomes fascinated by mysterious scraps of film footage—seemingly random scenes, luminously shot—that are disseminated on the Web and have spawned cults of viewers. Gibson wisely avoids addressing the import of 9/11 head on, but he somehow establishes a powerful correlative for it in Cayce's strange quest—through the Tokyo red-light district and the Moscow underworld—to find the anonymous filmmaker. In Gibson's eerie vision of our time, the future has come crashing upon us, fragmentary and undecipherable; as one character declares, "We have no future because our present is too volatile."

Behindlings, *by Nicola Barker (Ecco; $27.95).* In the fifth novel by one of *Granta's* freshly minted Best of Young British Novelists, a wily practical joker named Wesley is continually glancing behind him. The creator of the Loiter, a nationwide treasure hunt devised for a confectionery company, he is followed by a motley collection of fans as he tramps around Great Britain. The Behindlings, as Wesley calls them, spend the book debating elaborate riddles, found in candy-bar wrappers, that lead them to Canvey Island, a dreary spot in the Thames estuary. Barker is a talented writer whose verbal acuity can be exhilarating, and whose take on modern Britain, as it mopes through a dank, drab January, is both aggressively ordinary and insanely surreal. Yet it sometimes seems that her characters are stuck not only on the muddy shores of Canvey Island but in an even less accessible authorial conceit.



Yoga for People Who Can't Be Bothered to Do It, *by Geoff Dyer (Pantheon; $22).* If Dyer weren't so prolific, it would be tempting to crown him Slacker Laureate. A restless polymath and an irresistibly funny storyteller, he is adept at fiction, essay, and reportage, but happiest when twisting all three into something entirely his own. His latest autobiographical misadventures form an indolent anti-pilgrimage through "places where I stayed and things that have stayed with me." Intending to write a book on the concept of antiquity, he gets stoned and hangs out a lot, occasionally despairing as the ruins he wanders among—in Rome, Libya, Cambodia, and Detroit—seem to mirror the wreckage of his own life. While Dyer comically exaggerates his ineptitude by invoking the insights of Rilke, Auden, Nietzsche, Borges, and Frank O'Hara, the very extent to which their views have informed his suggests that this globetrotter's true home is in literature itself.

In the Land of Pain, *by Alphonse Daudet, translated from the French by Julian Barnes (Knopf; $18).* Syphilis may lack something of the romantic aura surrounding tuberculosis in literary history, but it was the illness of choice for the French nineteenth century: Flaubert, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Maupassant all suffered from it. Daudet, best known for his light, charming stories of southern France (Barnes judges him a tie for fourth-most important syphilitic), died of it, in 1897. These are his notes from underground. They include a narrative of his treatments (in which the author is hung in the air by the jaw and injected with a solution extracted from guinea pigs), ruminations on fear and fraud, and sharp observations of the healthy. But much of the book—and the book's force—lies in the patient's flailing search for a language to match his suffering. "Tonight, pain in the form of an impish little bird hopping hither and thither," he writes. "The only part of me that's alive is my pain."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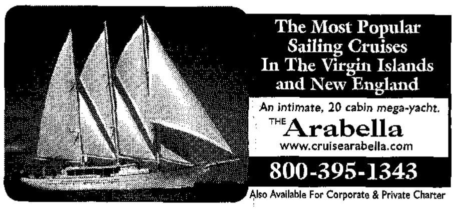
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BOOKS

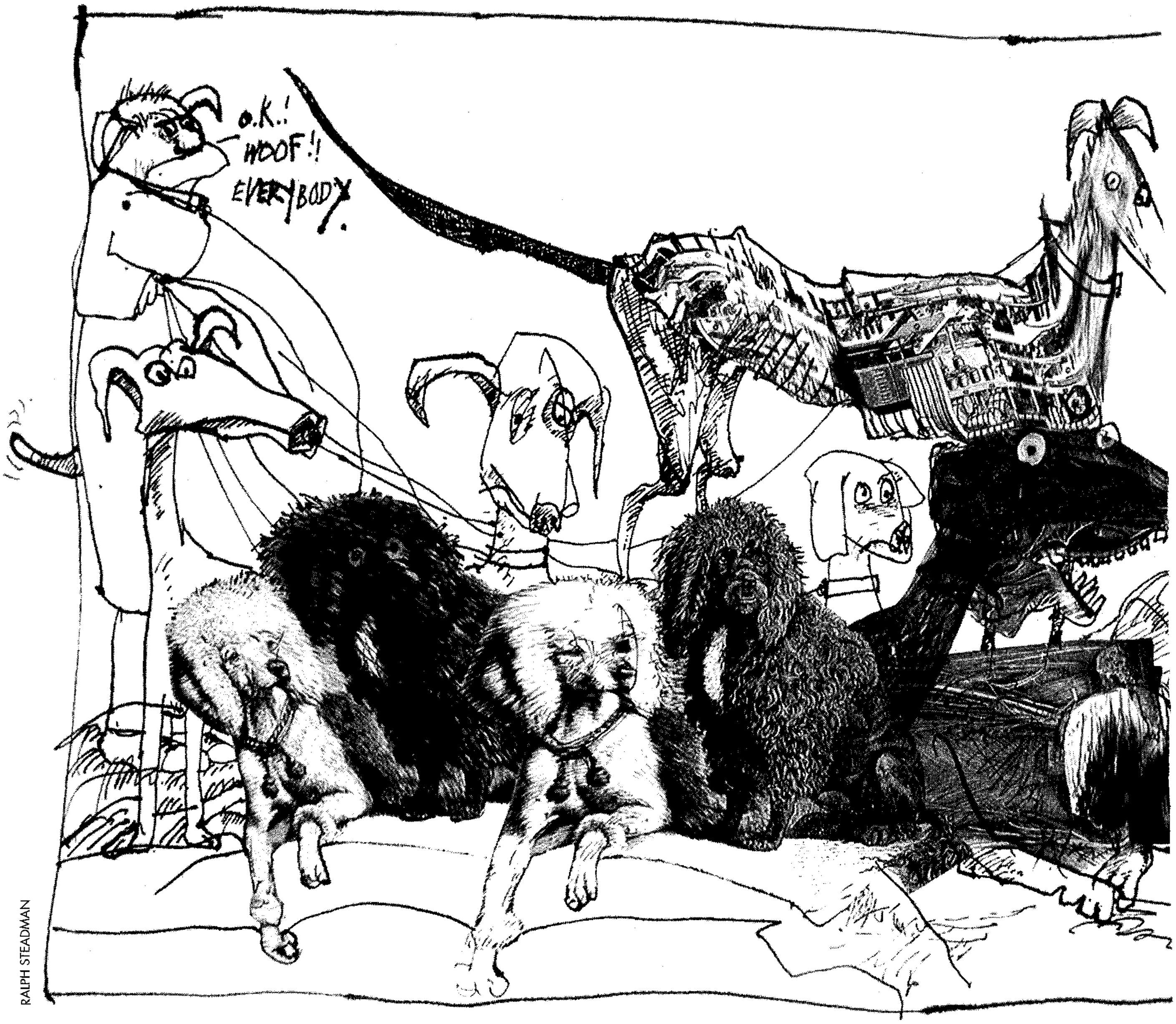
BARK

Do dogs have history?

BY LARISSA MACFARQUHAR

Stanley Coren, a psychologist and dog trainer, is haunted by a primal scene. He pictures a distant ancestor, clothed in skins, huddled by a tiny fire. Next to the ancestor sits a dog, its pointed ears pricked for sounds of danger—sounds too faint for the man to hear. "What do you hear, my dog?" the ancestor says. "You will tell me if I should worry?" Then, Coren writes, "his rough hand reached out and stroked the dog's fur, and that touch made them both feel content."

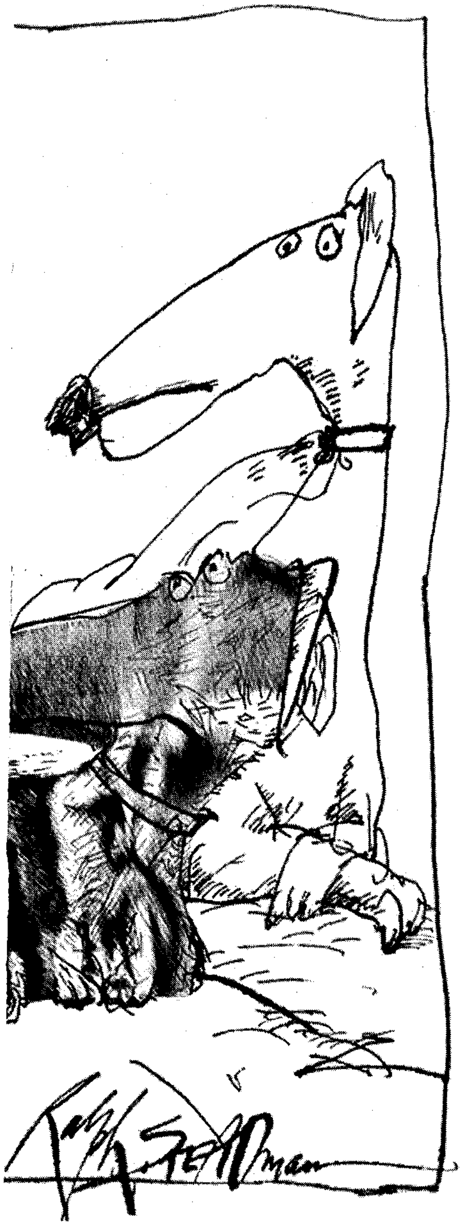
Coren is the author of several books about dogs—"The Intelligence of Dogs," "What Do Dogs Know?," "Why We Love the Dogs We Do," and "How to Speak Dog." He is the host of "Good Dog!," a Canadian television show. But his most recent book, "The Pawprints of History" (Free Press; $26), is his first attempt to do justice to the primal scene—to come to grips with the fourteen thousand years that man and dog have lived together. It is Coren's mission to set the record straight: he is indignant that conventional historians had ignored the canine contribution, as though, all these years, dogs had just been standing around, wagging their tails. "Pawprints of History" is not just a story; it is an homage. Historians must look carefully, in the crannies of the past, to find the dogs of yore. "The pawprints of many dogs are there," Coren writes, "but they are faint, and the winds of time erase them if they are not found and preserved." Dogs, like women before them, have been confined, illiterate and voiceless, to the domestic sphere, and so dog


O.K.! WOOF!! EVERYBODY.

RALPH STEADMAN

history, like women's history, must be found in private places.

But do dogs really have history? Of course, things have happened to dogs, and dogs have caused things to happen, and dog breeds have changed over time. But has dogginess itself changed? Dogs have been treated well and treated badly, thrown into battle and laid on sofas and bred into unnatural shapes, and yet each new birth produces a litter of Edenic puppies that develop entirely unaffected by their ancestors' ambiguous past. Can there be history without resentment? Without, at the very least, some sign of evolving irritation or pride at the way dog life has, in the course of things, turned out? One wonders what a modern dog would think, for instance, about the reign of the shogun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi, born in the Year of the Dog, 1646. Tsunayoshi felt so strongly about the welfare of dogs that he instituted the Laws of Compassion to protect them. Under these laws, not only injuring or killing but even ignoring a dog might be punished by death, and many people were forced to commit ritual suicide as a consequence. In one particularly rigorous month in 1687, more than three hundred people were put to death for violating the Laws of Compassion, and, in the course of Tsunayoshi's thirty-year reign, somewhere between sixty thousand and two hundred thousand people were either put to death or exiled for animal-welfare violations. Was this good for the dogs or bad for the dogs? There is no debate. Dogs have no ideas on the subject.



Still, whether or not dogs have their own history, there is no question that they have left their pawprints on ours. Had it not been for timely canine intervention, Coren shows, Columbus might never have made inroads into the New World, Henry VIII might never have founded the Church of England, and the American Revolution might never have happened. Take Columbus, for example. Columbus believed that for fighting Indians one dog was worth fifty soldiers, so when he advanced into America he took a pack of two-hundred-and-fifty-pound mastiffs with him. In one industrious battle in 1495, these mastiffs leaped upon and disembowelled more than a hundred Indians apiece. (This figure was reported by an observer of the fight, Bartolomé de las Casas, who, realizing that it was difficult to credit, went on to explain that the dogs were used to disembowelling deer and boars, and so found the soft and hairless skin of Indians quite easy to bite into.)

Or take the Church of England. Henry VIII wanted the Pope to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, so he sent Cardinal Wolsey to the Vatican to negotiate. Everything was going fine, the story goes, and Wolsey kneeled to kiss the Pope's toe, but, just then, Wolsey's greyhound, Urian (whom Wolsey had, oddly, brought with him), charged forward and bit down hard on the papal foot. This injury put an end to the negotiations, Henry was not granted his divorce, and the English Reformation followed shortly afterward. Coren's case for the canine origins of the American Rev-

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olution is, admittedly, somewhat more inventive, having to do with the fact that, in the fourteenth century, Robert the Bruce, of Scotland, was saved from death by one of his Talbots. Had Robert not been saved, Coren reasons, the Scottish Stuarts would not have taken over the English throne, and porphyria, the hereditary disease that afflicted mad King George III, would not have entered the English royal line. Thus, with English monarchs behaving more rationally, things might have been worked out in a friendly way with the rebellious colonials.

For all the human lives that dogs have saved—and among those rescued from certain death are Lewis and Clark (charging buffalo, Newfoundland), Alexander the Great (charging elephant, greyhound), Napoleon (stormy sea, Newfoundland), Abraham Lincoln (dark cave, mutt)—the history of the species has been a history of oppression. In the nineteenth century, dogs were used in restaurant kitchens to run in large wheels that turned the spits for roasting meat over a fire. One story has it that, during a church service in Bath, the Bishop of Gloucester, who was giving the sermon, uttered the line "It was then that Ezekiel saw the wheel," and at the mention of the word "wheel" several turnspit dogs, who had been brought to church as foot warmers, ran for the door.

Dogs have had their defenders—most notably, the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham. "The day *may come*, when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny," Bentham wrote in 1789, the year that the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the American Bill of Rights were drafted. He went on:

> The French have already discovered that the blackness of the skin is no reason why a human being should be abandoned without redress to the caprice of a tormentor. It may come some day to be recognized, that the number of the legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the *os sacrum*, are reasons equally insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the same fate. . . .The question is not, Can they *reason*? nor, Can they *talk*? but, Can they *suffer*?

Eventually, dogs acquired rights. Henry Bergh, a wealthy American dilettante, took up the canine cause and in 1866 founded the A.S.P.C.A. One of his chief concerns was preventing the use of dogs to turn spits (although twice when he showed up at restaurants to make sure they were no longer using dogs for this purpose he discovered that they had started using black children instead). Dogs acquired rights, but they still had a respect problem. The notion of dogs thinking was considered ridiculous. Part of the problem was Clever Hans. Clever Hans was a notorious horse who lived a hundred years ago in Germany, and acquired his name because he could solve simple mathematical problems and had a working knowledge of German. His owner would pose a question, and Clever Hans would answer by tapping with his hoof. The horse caused a sensation, and many took his prowess as proof that the intelligence of animals had been woefully underestimated. But then a little-known psychologist named Oskar Pfungst conducted a series of experiments showing that, by observing his questioners and picking up tiny signs of relaxation in their posture, Clever Hans had detected when it was time to stop tapping; when given a problem by someone who didn't know the answer, he was stumped. Ever since, many psychologists and animal behaviorists, reluctant to be twice fooled, have followed Descartes in his refusal to attribute to animals any conscious intelligence whatever. Only recently have animal behaviorists realized that science, in heeding Cartesian dogma more than the demonstrable ingenuity of animals

AMERICAN SMOOTH

We were dancing—it must have
been a foxtrot or a waltz,
something romantic but
requiring restraint,
rise and fall, precise
execution as we moved
into the next song without
stopping, two chests heaving
above a seven-league
stride—such perfect agony
one learns to smile through,
ecstatic mimicry
being the sine qua non
of American Smooth.
And because I was distracted
by the effort of
keeping my frame
(the leftward lean, head turned
just enough to gaze out
past your ear and always
smiling, smiling),
I didn't notice
how still you'd become until
we had done it
(for two measures?
four?)—achieved flight,
that swift and serene
magnificence,
before the earth
remembered who we were
and brought us down.

—*Rita Dove*

such as Clever Hans, had got its logic backward: it had put Descartes before the horse.

But do we want dogs to be clever? Intelligence seems like a good thing in a pet, the way that more power in a computer or extra controls on a camera seem like good things. But Coren points out that, just as extra controls on a camera can be confusing, and, in the hands of the amateur, a humble Instamatic might yield better pictures, so sometimes an owner may be better off with a dog that is not the sharpest knife in the drawer.

It can, for instance, be more difficult to train clever dogs, since clever dogs respond more precisely to words. Consider the case of Shadow, a golden retriever of unusual acuity. One day in obedience class, he was commanded by an inexperienced boy, “Come on, Shadow, sit down!” Shadow looked uncertain for a moment; then he lowered his rear end to the ground and his chest nearly as far down, and began with his front paws to drag himself in that position toward the boy, whimpering as he went. The obedience instructor was puzzled by this strange behavior, until he realized that Shadow—brilliantly, tragically—was trying to come, sit, and lie down all at once. But, more than ease of training, there is the question of stimulation. The old eat-walk-sleep routine may be fine for a King Charles spaniel that doesn’t mind confining its horizons to a block or two, but a Border collie or a German shepherd in the same position might become restless. And not only is it a nuisance to have a dog that addresses its determination and intelligence to techniques of escape; it’s also depressing. Who wants to share a house with a creature whose only thought is to leave? One that is not satisfied with scraps of time and food but dreams perpetually of forests and lampposts?

In “How to Speak Dog,” Coren discusses, with diagrams, ear talk, eye talk, scent talk, and tail talk, and he appends a “visual glossary and doggish phrasebook.” He parses the subtleties of tail-wagging, explaining the shades of meaning that distinguish the slight tail wag (“I see you looking at me. You like me, don’t you?”) from the broad tail wag (“I like you”) and the slow tail wag, with tail at half-mast (“I want to know what you mean, but I just can’t quite figure it out”). He explains that the tail, even when not wagging, can be verbose. What is a dog saying when it holds its tail almost horizontal, pointing away from its body but not stiff? “Something interesting may be happening here.” Up and slightly curved over the back? “I’m top dog.” Down, near hind legs, but with the legs bent slightly inward? “I’m feeling a bit insecure.” Coren also elucidates common human-canine misunderstandings. He observes, for instance, that licking often isn’t kissing but, rather, a gesture of respect or a sign that the licker is experiencing stress. Yawning, likewise, does not, in a dog, indicate boredom but may be a gesture on the part of a dominant dog to a lesser one that it does not intend him harm. (Coren himself has yawned at a threatened, hostile dog in a successful attempt to get it to stop growling at him.)

Once, Coren was telephoned by a woman named Josephine, who was having trouble with her Rottweiler, Bluto. The problem was that Bluto was too affectionate. When Josephine’s husband, Vincent, was around, he would behave, but when Vincent went to work Bluto wouldn’t leave Josephine alone. He would put a paw on her knee; he would gaze into her eyes; he would sit very close on the sofa and lean against her, and if she moved away to make room for him he would follow and lean on her again. Josephine would stroke him on his head, but it seemed that nothing she could do satisfied his longing for love. When Coren arrived at her house to assess the situation for himself, however, he realized that Bluto was not demonstrating affection at all. The paw on the knee, the staring down, the leaning—all these were gestures designed to convey to Josephine that Bluto was of a higher status in the household than she was. And, alas, Josephine’s response—the stroke on the head—was, in dog language, classically submissive, akin to the humble lick that a low-status dog or a puppy would give a dominant dog to show that it knew its place. Coren told Josephine that she had to force Bluto into submission.

Motivating “How to Speak Dog” is the Franciscan fantasy of talking to animals. But would talking to dogs be a good thing? If dogs could talk, the question of obedience in a case like Bluto’s might become politically awkward, and

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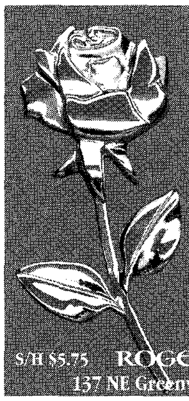

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even Coren is no weak sentimentalist about obedience. "Never give the dog anything for free," he commands darkly. "Before you feed the dog, make it sit; before you pet it, make it sit; before the dog gets to go out the door, make it sit. . . . Random repetition is important, not simply as practice for the commands but also as reinforcement for the idea that the dog must pay attention to you and follow instructions without question." Dogs may have their history, but they must not be allowed to cherish ideas above their station. When Coren encountered an insubordinate Labrador named Bradley while teaching an obedience class, he instructed Bradley's owners to topple him over and prevent him from getting up, even if that required sitting on him, for a minimum of five minutes, twice a day. If Bradley failed to respond to a command, they were to roll him onto his side and stare him in the eye for fifteen seconds. Within weeks, Bradley was a new dog.

If dogs could talk, what would they say? They might be dull. Or brutal. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote of the dog, "His silence has won for him a higher name for virtue than his conduct justifies." But, as long as animals don't talk, it doesn't matter if they're brutal. When it comes to animals, we are all multiculturalists. Even the most devout vegan doesn't lose sleep over the carnage taking place in nature—doesn't lift a finger to try to stop lions or tigers shredding their prey in the most gruesome and painful fashion. Would we like dogs more if we could talk to them? Some of the best writing about animals consists of expressions of bafflement. The philosopher Thomas Nagel wrote an essay titled "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?," in which he pointed out the difference between the difficulty of imagining what it would be like for him to be a bat (how it would feel to hang upside down in the dark, or to fly about and steer by sound, and so on) and the utter impossibility of imagining what it is like for a bat to be a bat. This is one of the appealing things about dogs. Alien creatures around the house produce a kind of domestic sublime, a shiver of mental wilderness. We are often told that trouble between people is the product of poor communication, and if only we knew how to talk to each other harmony would result. But dog love suggests the opposite. Dog love is perfect because there is no talking at all.

In the early years of the last century, Hachiko, an Akita with a well-developed sense of time, got into the habit of meeting his master, Professor Eisaburo Ueno, of Tokyo University, every day when he arrived from work at the Shibuya subway station. Ueno died in 1925, but Hachiko continued to meet his train every day for nine years, until he himself died, in 1934. The world's most famous Skye terrier, Greyfriars Bobby, remained by his master's grave in Edinburgh for fourteen years, until his own death, in 1872. There are dogs who have committed voluntary suttee. It goes without saying that a human being who attempted to behave in any of these ways would be urged to stop and, with some hand-wringing, be hospitalized. But dogs are permitted to love unrequited and to excess. Dogs who love too much, codependent dogs, or clingy, pathetic dogs are not reproved. Love and altruism are never pathological in a dog.

Witness this testimonial by the novelist J. R. Ackerley to his German shepherd, Queenie. "I don't believe there was anything special about her, except that she was rather a beauty," Ackerley wrote. "She offered me what I had never found in my sexual life, constant, single-hearted, incorruptible, uncritical devotion. . . . She placed herself entirely under my control. From the moment she established herself in my heart and home, my obsession with sex fell wholly away from me. . . . I never prowled the London streets again, nor had the slightest inclination to do so. On the contrary, whenever I thought of it, I was positively thankful to be rid of it all, the anxieties, the frustrations, the wastage of time and spirit. . . . I was just under fifty when this animal came into my hands, and the fifteen years she lived with me were the happiest of my life."

Queenie didn't talk, and Ackerley didn't want her to. Sometimes pawprints are enough. ♦

From the Toronto Globe & Mail.

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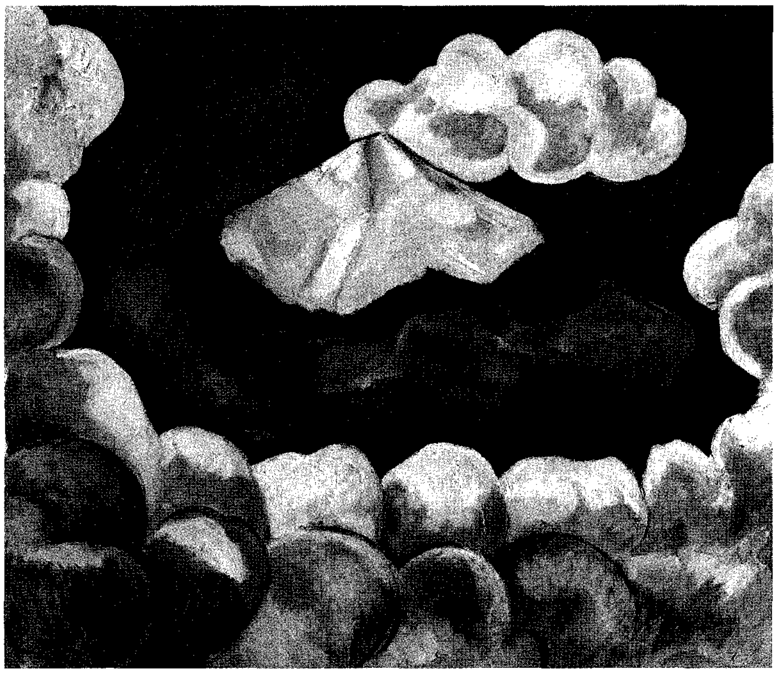
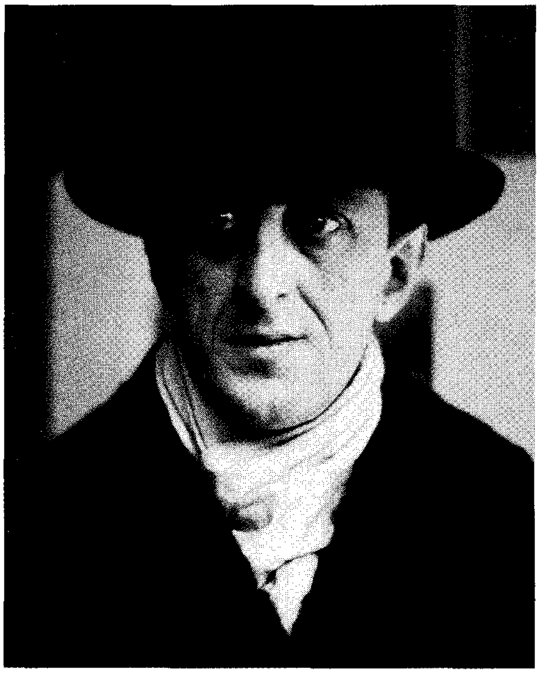
THE SEARCHER

Marsden Hartley's eloquent restlessness.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

Marsden Hartley was a great artist whose greatness is of a piece with the provincial clumsiness of American high culture in the early twentieth century. A strong Hartley retrospective that has opened at the Wadsworth Atheneum, in Hartford, where it will remain until April 20th, confirms the lasting grandeur of the Yankee modernist, who stands in the history of modern art like an increasingly unavoidable, bumpy detour. At different points in his career (he died in 1943, at the age of sixty-six), Hartley was inspired by French masters, primarily Cézanne, and by German Expressionists, notably the Blue Rider group, which included Wassily Kandinsky. He adored Germany and had extended stays in Berlin. He participated in the fast-track salons of his day: Gertrude Stein's in Paris, Alfred Stieglitz's in New York, Eugene O'Neill's in Provincetown, and Mabel Dodge Luhan's in New Mexico. A secretive homosexual, he was, in his later years, part of an elegant gay scene that formed around the photographer George Platt Lynes in New York. He fit in nowhere. Solitude owned him.

Hartley's "Popocatépetl, Spirited Morning—Mexico" (1932); the artist, photographed by Alfred Stieglitz in 1915-16.

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON/GIFT OF ALFRED STIEGLITZ

In retrospect, Hartley's best art—made in Berlin from 1913 to 1915, and especially in Maine, starting in the mid-nineteen-thirties—looms so far above the works of such celebrated contemporaries as Georgia O'Keeffe, Charles Demuth, Arthur Dove, and John Marin that it poses the question of how his achievement was even possible. Like Edward Hopper, a very different painter and Hartley's only equal in their generation, he possessed a self-reliant temperament that pitted gritty American resources against the intimidating authority of European art. The utter freshness of the Hartford show—even apart from the presence of unfamiliar gems that have been turned up by the curator, Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser—marks Hartley as both an ethical and an aesthetic hero. Beauty comes and goes in his work, but intuitions of truth are constant. Hartley's work confronts the viewer with the question: Do you live in a way commensurate with such honesty?

Hartley was fabulously ugly, in an Abraham Lincoln way; a big man, he had a long face that joined a high dome, deep-set eyes under sloping brows, a huge nose, and, over all, the look of an extraordinarily intelligent hound dog. In photographs, his gaze is often worried but always firm: he stood his ground. He was born Edmund Hartley in Lewiston, Maine, the youngest of eight children of English immigrants. His father worked in the cotton mills. After his mother died, when he was eight, his father remarried and moved the family to Cleveland, where Hartley studied at the Cleveland School of Art and became devoted to the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman. (The earliest painting in the show is a brooding little picture, dated 1905, of Whitman's house in Camden, New Jersey.) In 1899, Hartley came to New York, and worked his way through Impressionist, Neo-Impressionist, and Fauvist styles ("Storm Clouds, Maine," from 1906-07, is a serendipitous marvel). He imbibed spiritualist ideas, and met and was influenced by Albert Pinkham Ryder. He also took on his stepmother's maiden name, Marsden. In 1912, he set off for Europe.

The heraldic semi-abstractions that Hartley made in Berlin in the years before and after the onset of the First World War are such icons of modern style that, seeing them one at a time, I have sometimes tired of them. Their conjunction of jazzy Cubist composition and rough Expressionist handling can have the air of textbook demonstrations performed with forced high spirits. The panache of the pictures that are dedicated to Hartley's lover Karl von Freyburg, a German soldier who was killed early in the war, strikes a weirdly manic tone of mourning.

The Hartford show has rejuvenated my appreciation of these works. Seen in quantity, they disarm the viewer with the restless variety of their formal invention. Berlin liberated Hartley artistically and sexually. His sorrow at the loss of von Freyburg, of whom little is known, only amplified his gratitude to the man. In the paintings that display the initials "Kv.F," the artist used his gifts to resuscitate the fallen hero, whose emotional presence Hartley would not let dissipate. This intention is felt in the almost violent compression of these works, in which all the elements go *bang!* simultaneously, without flying apart. Nothing else in that epoch of applied Cubism—think of the airy expansiveness of a Robert Delaunay—really compares. In Berlin, Hartley did something new that has stayed new.

In 1915, the political pressures of the war forced Hartley to return to New York. Because of the apparently pro-German nature of his paintings, with their military symbols, including von Freyburg's posthumously awarded Iron Cross, his reception in artistic circles was chilly. He entered upon nearly two decades of wandering, both geographically and artistically. Uncertainty plagues his lovely but brittle Cubist still-lifes, his Cézannesque landscapes, and, here and there in different genres, a cultivation of bulky forms, outlined in black, that steer increasingly close to the style of Max Beckmann. (Parallels between Hartley and Beckmann, though barely mentioned in the Wadsworth's formidable catalogue, seem an obvious, rich field for future study.) Sojourns in Mexico and the Bavarian Alps contributed to the mature flowering of Hartley's talent. He developed a sense of mystical immanence in desert landscapes and a tactile appreciation of the contours of rocks and mountains. (He once declared, "As a painter, I *have* to have a mountain.") His paintings of a woebegone hamlet, delectably named Dogtown, inland from Gloucester, Massachusetts, mark a turning point. Hartley visited the place many times, producing works that distill lonesome ecstasies of communion with subjects that he had all to himself, if only because no one else would have noticed them.

Along the way, he made what I regard as the world's best bad painting, "Eight Bells Folly, Memorial for Hart Crane" (1933)—a farrago of crude, private symbols jammed together as if their shelf life were about to expire. Crane, the seraphic, desperately ambitious, miserable homosexual poet, who committed suicide in 1932 by throwing himself off a ship in the Caribbean, was a natural subject of identification for Hartley, whose description of his own painting is worth quoting. It exemplifies his odd spirit of soberly deliberated abandon: "There is a ship foundering—a sun, a moon, two triangles, clouds—a shark pushing up out of the mad waters—and at the right corner—a bell with '8' on it—symbolizing eight bells—or noon when he jumped off—and around the bell are a lot of men's eyes—that look up from below to see who the new lodger is to be." There is much more, including numerological folderol concerning the figures 2, 9, and 33. But the whole is infectiously wild, with frothing paint in resonant deep blues. Once you start looking at it, you may find it absurdly difficult to stop. Defiantly over the top, this cacophonous work suggests an effort literally to wake the dead.

Death was Hartley's most efficacious muse. Having memorialized von Freyburg and Crane, he became deeply engaged by the deaths of three members of a Nova Scotia fishing family—two brothers and a cousin—who drowned in 1936. The naïve-looking style of Hartley's paintings of the Masons is one of the most successful feats of modern, self-conscious primitivism. In one of two paintings in the show, entitled "Fishermen's Last Supper," the doomed brothers are depicted with asterisk-like stars over their heads, as they sit at table with their parents and sister. Hartley wrote, in an elegiac poem about the tragedy, "For Wine, they drank the ocean— / for bread, they ate their own despairs. . . ." His idealizing of the Masons had an erotic aspect. He had written a fierce love poem to one of the sons, Alty, including these lines: "Hair stood on end like fury-fire / mouth blowing steam of thick desire / we will go, you will go, you will / not go, without me." It seems that in the pain of loss Hartley touched the bedrock of his feelings.

Hartley's last years, which were spent primarily in Maine, are a poetic adventure of art and place comparable to that of Gauguin in the South Seas or Monet at Giverny. Hartley percolated down into himself and perfected a rugged, often dark but always glowing style of understated symbolism. (After Beckmann, that style may be considered the foremost late advance of modern Expressionism.) His sexuality is apparent in his grave renderings of taciturn, hunky fishermen and athletes—with blocky pectorals, huge nipples, and sprays of body hair that are like semaphores of fascination—but their rapt tone is hardly different from that of his seascapes and still-lifes. Like Whitman, Hartley grew into an easy oneness with the real, in all its guises. You always recognize a late Hartley immediately—you feel it as a complete, solid, wise thing almost before you see it.

"This is no book; who touches this, touches a man," Whitman wrote, and it is impossible to judge Hartley fairly without entering into that kind of emotional contract with his paintings. His obdurate romanticism made him a marginal case in histories of modern art that were keyed to stylistic movements and formal innovations. (In the forties, Clement Greenberg wrote appreciatively of Hartley's manner while remaining testily wary of his subject matter.) Like other great modern individualists—Edvard Munch, Beckmann, Hopper, Balthus—Hartley profits today from a long condescension that has only preserved the shock of his singularity. The Dogtown master is having his day. ♦

MUSICAL EVENTS

BLOOD WEDDING

The tough beauty of "Jenůfa."

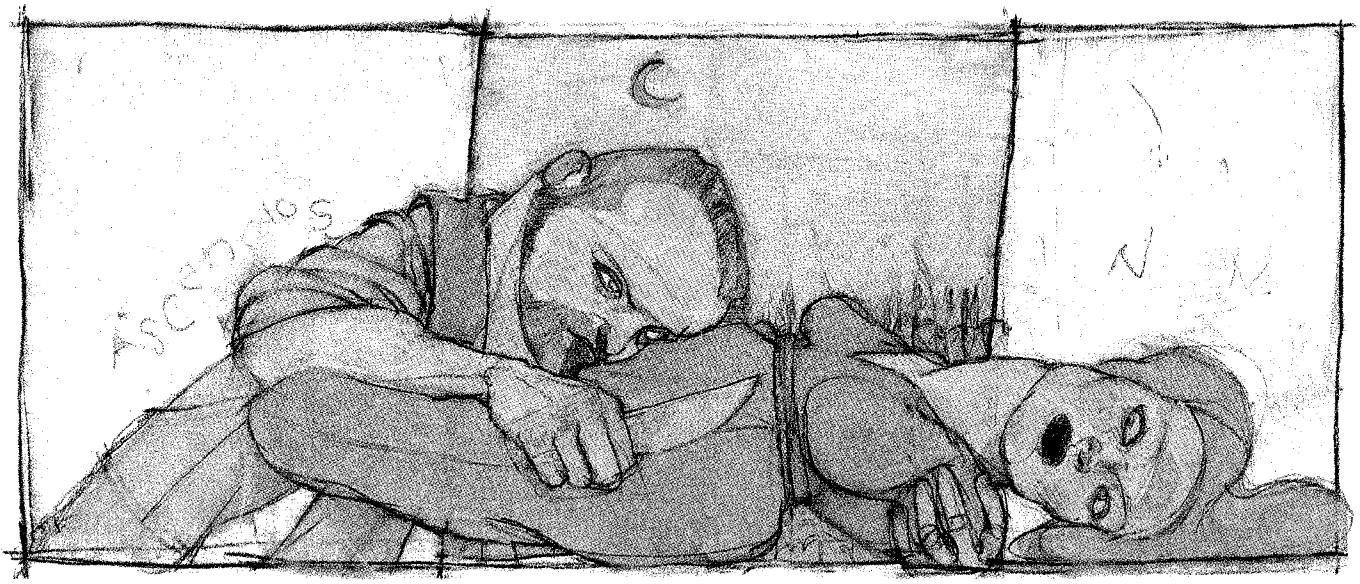
BY ALEX ROSS

A few minutes before the end of Leoš Janáček's "Jenůfa," now at the Metropolitan Opera, the orchestra unleashes a long-drawn-out, floor-trembling storm of sound, in the elemental key of C. A pause follows, during which the audience may be tempted to make a noise of its own, particularly when a singer of the magnitude of Karita Mattila has been working at the height of her art. But the hall is silent; even those who do not know the opera feel that something remains to be said. Over pulsing chords, which have the rhythm of heavy breathing, violins and soprano begin to sing an entirely new melody, in the new key of B-flat—a long, sustained note, followed by a quickly shaking figure, with a shadow of C below. The music has the motion of a bird in flight: it glides, beats its wings, dips down, and soars again into blue heaven. Then another new theme surfaces, one that cuts through the octave like the sun at noon. The music disappears into brilliant chords of E-flat, bedecked with overtones and shimmering arpeggios.

It is one of the most uncannily beautiful scenes in opera, and all the more remarkable for coming at the end of one of opera's creepiest tales. Jenůfa is a Moravian peasant girl who has had a baby out of wedlock with her cousin Števa. When Števa learns of the infant, he flees, and shortly thereafter the baby disappears. Laca, Števa's jealous half brother, steps in to marry Jenůfa, which he has wanted to do all along, to the point of violent rage. In the middle of the wedding, terrified shrieks rise offstage: a baby's corpse has been found beneath the ice. Jenůfa recognizes her child, and the villagers advance on her with murderous intent. Then Jenůfa's stepmother—the Kostelnička—makes a blood-curdling confession: in an effort to save the reputation of the family, she killed the baby herself. Once the pillar of the village church, she is dragged off to what will surely be a bad fate, and Jenůfa is left alone with her new husband. This is where Janáček stages his fake climax in C major, and we realize that the preceding horror has been a test for the couple. That birdlike melody expresses Jenůfa's loving resignation, as she gives Laca permission to walk away from the ugliness that is surrounding her. Laca answers, "I would bear far more than that for you. What does the world matter, when we have each other?" At that moment, Janáček's two closing melodies merge into one.

"Jenůfa" is a deceptively "folkish" opera that reasserts its greatness with each performance. It begins small, with colorful scenes of village life; the vocal lines follow the rhythms and pitches of conversational speech. By the end, Janáček is working on a grand scale, his music radiating an almost religious ecstasy. There is another melody in the repertory that glides and shakes as Jenůfa's song does—the theme of reconciliation that rises over the ruins of Valhalla, at the end of the "Ring." The love of Jenůfa and Laca, like the love of Wagner's Brünnhilde, acquires a cosmic, world-changing force. Yet Janáček never loses touch with the grit of the real. What we hear is the sound not of transcendence but of simple happiness, which subdues darkness by forgetting it. "Jenůfa" glows from within.

What a phenomenon Karita Mattila has become! Her voice is a complete instrument, a thing of beauty and power. She sails over the orchestra without effort, retaining the honeyed warmth of her tone even at the highest volume. Perhaps a Czech singer would have brought tangier diction to the part—when Gabriela Beňačková sang Jenůfa ten years ago, in the days before Met titles, you could fool yourself into thinking that you understood Czech—but, all in all, who cares? As other star singers acquire weird mannerisms or overreach themselves, Mattila keeps it



In Janáček's masterpiece of village horror, a jealous brother's rage is transformed into a promise of deep happiness.

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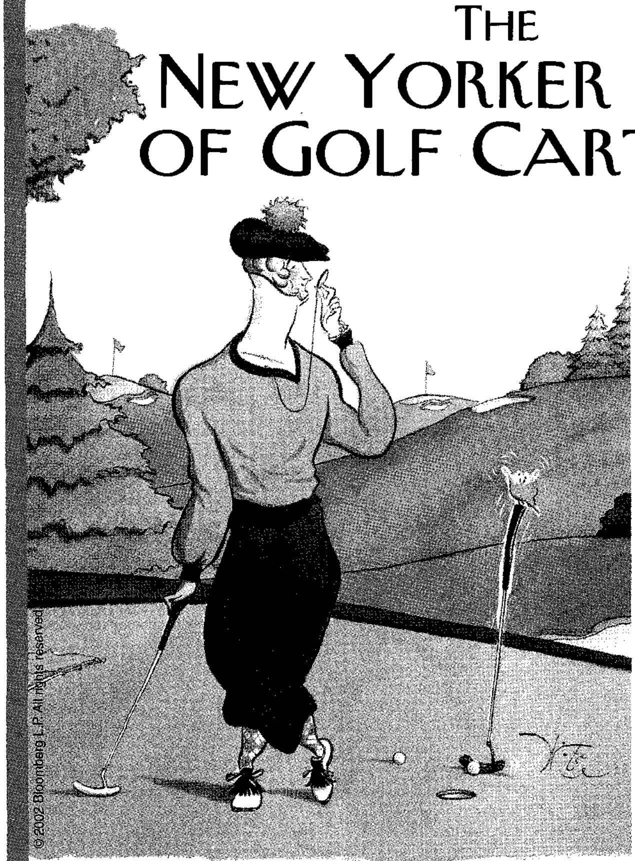

simple and conquers all. And, yes, she looks fabulous, even when chugging a beer. Let's hope that the punishing role of Salome, which she sings in Paris this fall and at the Met next year, does not damage her voice.

The rising tenor Kim Begley, who, as Laca, is making his Met début, was a bit overshadowed by the Mattila extravaganza, but he sang from strength, showing no strain when he reached up to a high B-flat toward the end. His tone lacked some color, but it still rang true. Christopher Ventris, another big-voiced young tenor, made for an impetuous, colorful Števa. Deborah Polaski sang the stepmother, and, though she supplied her usual glowering intensity, she competed unsuccessfully with my vivid memories of Anja Silja, who sang this role with ferocious psychological specificity at the Deutsche Oper, in Berlin, last year. We don't have a sense of who Polaski's Kostelnička really is, or why she does what she does. With Silja, it was as if you had read an entire Tolstoy story about the character the moment she walked onstage. Something about the way she folded her laundry made a gruesome climax inevitable. An excellent new recording of "Jenůfa" on the Erato label, led by Bernard Haitink, gives us Mattila and Silja together; this is singing of intelligent fire.

The Met's new staging, which runs through February 13th, is more or less the same as a recent Covent Garden production, from which the Erato recording derives. It begins with a vaguely realistic depiction of a mill in a wheat field, but in Act II the stage is occupied by a huge, annoying rock; a friend suggested that it represents Society's Oppressive Conception of Sin. In Act III, the rock is still there, though now it's broken into fragments, so that it no longer looks like a mixup at the set shop. On opening night, the stage movement lacked energy and purpose; even Mattila occasionally seemed unsure of herself. But Vladimir Jurowski, the gifted new music director of the Glyndebourne Festival, took command with his forceful, Karajanesque conducting, choosing some riskily slow tempos but drawing out a sumptuous, Wagnerian sound. The Met orchestra clearly likes him: such finesse is usually heard only when James Levine is on the podium. Never mind the high-school symbolism—this "Jenůfa" makes a glorious noise. ♦

LEGAL NOTICE

IF YOU PURCHASED A SUBSCRIPTION TO THIS OR ANOTHER MAGAZINE, THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT MAY AFFECT YOUR RIGHTS

This notice describes a proposed nationwide settlement of class action lawsuits relating to magazine subscriptions that has been reached in In Re Magazine Antitrust Litigation, 00 Civ. 4889 (S.D.N.Y.) (the "Action"), and preliminarily approved by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York (the "Court").

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT OF MONEY OR OTHER COMPENSATION TO THE CLASS MEMBERS BUT INSTEAD SOLELY ADDRESSES CERTAIN INDUSTRY RULES AND PRACTICES THAT WERE DIRECTLY CHALLENGED IN THE ACTION AS BEING UNLAWFUL (SEE "THE CLAIMS IN THE LAWSUIT" SECTION BELOW).

This announcement is intended to give class members notice under Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Order of the Court dated September 20, 2002, as modified on September 30, 2002, that a hearing will be held before the Hon. Richard Conway Casey on May 27, 2003 at 11:00 A.M. to determine whether: (a) to certify the proposed settlement class under Rule 23; (b) the proposed settlement of the Action is fair, reasonable and adequate; (c) a final judgment should be entered dismissing the Action with prejudice to the class members; and (d) to approve counsels' application for attorneys' fees and expenses. The rest of this notice summarizes the terms of the proposed settlement. You can obtain a copy of the settlement agreement, the Consolidated Amended Class Action Complaint (the "Complaint"), and a list of the magazine subscriptions at issue in the Action, at www.magazine.org or by writing to The Garden City Group, Inc., the Administrator of the Notice Program, at Magazine Antitrust Litigation, P.O. Box #6041, Merrick, NY 11566-9000 (the "Administrator"). **ANY QUESTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS REGARDING THIS NOTICE OR THE SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE ADMINISTRATOR AT THE ADDRESS LISTED ABOVE OR BY CALLING 1-888-210-0118. PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE ADMINISTRATOR WITH QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR CURRENT SUBSCRIPTIONS UNLESS THOSE QUESTIONS RELATE TO THE CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT.**

DO NOT CONTACT THE COURT, COUNSEL TO THE PARTIES, THE NEW YORKER OR ANY PUBLISHER REGARDING THIS NOTICE. THE ADMINISTRATOR, WHERE APPROPRIATE, WILL REFER ANY QUESTIONS TO THE APPROPRIATE PERSON.

The Claims in the Lawsuit

The Complaint was filed in this Action in or about October 2000, against the Magazine Publishers of America ("MPA"), a consumer magazine trade association, and fourteen magazine publishing companies (the "Publisher Defendants"). The Complaint alleged an agreement among the Publisher Defendants and the MPA to set the minimum price of or maximum discount on magazine subscriptions through the enactment of MPA Guideline 4(a) and/or the collective action among publishers to adhere to the ABC's 50% Rule (as referred to ¶45 of the Complaint) or the similar Rule of the BPA International pertaining to its definition of "paid circulation." The Complaint asked this Court to eliminate or modify Guideline 4(a) and to award damages that allegedly were suffered by consumers who purchased subscriptions to the Publisher Defendants' magazines.

The defendants have denied the material allegations of the Complaint. The parties have now agreed to settle the Action in its entirety. On September 20, 2002, the Court preliminarily approved the settlement.

The Terms of the Proposed Settlement

In the proposed settlement, the defendants have agreed to do two things: (i) the MPA shall delete in its entirety MPA Guideline 4(a); and (ii) the defendants shall defray the costs incurred in connection with the Action, including the costs of the Notice program involving notifying class members of the terms and conditions of the proposed settlement and the Plaintiffs' actual attorneys' fees and expenses awarded by the Court up to $1.1 million.

In exchange, the Plaintiffs have agreed that, if the settlement is approved, the Court will enter a judgment dismissing the Action with prejudice, and the named Plaintiffs and all class members who have not duly opted-out of the class will be deemed to be subject to the release of this case, which provides as follows: "As of the date on which the Agreement is Finally Approved, the Publisher Defendants and the MPA . . . shall be completely released, acquitted, and forever discharged, from any and all claims, demands, actions, suits, causes of action, injuries or damages, whether class, individual or otherwise in nature, that Plaintiffs, the Class Members or each of them, in his or her capacity as a subscriber to a magazine, ever had or now has, in law or equity, under federal or state law, relating to an agreement to set the minimum price of or maximum discount on magazine subscriptions through the enactment of MPA Guideline 4(a) and/or the collective action among publishers to adhere to the ABC's 50% Rule (as referred to in ¶45 of the Amended Complaint) or the similar Rule of the BPA International pertaining to its definition of 'paid circulation.'"

The release also releases class action claims that were previously brought (but subsequently dismissed without prejudice) by a plaintiff in the State Court in San Diego, California, who asserted similar allegations against the defendants albeit based on violations of California state laws. The California action was styled *Coossan v. Hearst Corp., et. al.*, No. GIC 752985. A copy of the Coossan Complaint can be obtained at www.magazine.org.

Who are the Publisher Defendants?

The Publisher Defendants are: Condé Nast Publications, Inc.; Gruner + Jahr Printing and Publishing Company; Hachette Filipacchi Media U.S., Inc. (f/k/a Hachette Filipacchi Magazines, Inc.); The Hearst Corporation; International Data Group, Inc.; Meredith Corporation; Newsweek, Inc.; Primedia, Inc.; Reader's Digest Association, Inc.; Rodale, Inc.; Time, Inc.; Time4 Media, Inc. (f/k/a Times Mirror Magazines, Inc.); TV Guide, Inc.; and Ziff-Davis Publishing, Inc.

Who is in the Class?

Class Members are those persons who purchased a subscription to this publication or to other publications that were published by any of the Publisher Defendants during the period from and including July 1, 1996 up to and including April 15, 2002 (the "Class"). For purposes of determining inclusion in the Class, it does not matter whether you purchased your subscription from one of the Publisher Defendants, or through agents, subagents or other third party marketers. You are not, however, a member of the Class if you did not purchase a magazine subscription within the time period stated above, or if you purchased your magazines at newsstands.

Your Right to Object to the Proposed Settlement

You have the right to appear, in person or by counsel, at the hearing on the proposed settlement in order to comment on, or object to, the terms of the proposed settlement, its adequacy or reasonableness and/or the award of attorneys' fees and expenses to class counsel. However, you will only be heard at that time if you first, on or about May 5, 2003, (a) file with the Court a notice of your intention to appear, which includes a basis for your objection, a statement identifying the magazines to which you subscribed, and the approximate time period for each subscription; and (b) serve copies of the notice (and all other papers you intend to rely upon) by hand or first class mail on Plaintiffs' co-lead counsel, Bruce E. Gerstein, Esq., Garwin, Bonzaft, Gerstein, & Fisher, LLP, 1501 Broadway, Suite 1416, New York, NY 10036 and H. Laddie Montague, Jr., Esq., Berger & Montague, 1622 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, and on Defendants' coordinating counsel, Lawrence I. Fox, Esq., at McDermott, Will & Emery, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, 11th Floor, New York, New York 10020.

Your Right to Opt-Out of the Settlement

ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAR AT THE HEARING, YOU HAVE NO OBLIGATION TO DO SO. If you do not wish to participate in or be bound by the proposed settlement, you can exclude yourself (i.e., "opt-out"). To opt-out, you MUST send a request for exclusion in an envelope POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN May 5, 2003, to the Administrator of the Notice Program Magazine Antitrust Litigation, P.O. Box 9000 #6041, Merrick, NY 11566-9000. The request for exclusion must state your full name, the magazine(s) to which you subscribed and the approximate time period of each subscription, and the address to which your magazines were sent. IF YOU DO NOT EXCLUDE YOURSELF, you will be barred from prosecuting any legal action against the MPA or its members and the Publisher Defendants to the full extent of the release set forth in the "Terms of the Proposed Settlement" section above.

Examination of Papers and Inquiries

For a more detailed statement of the matters involved in the Action, including the Complaint, the settlement agreement, motion papers and certain orders of the Court, you may visit the office of the Clerk of the United States District Court, 500 Pearl Street, New York, New York, during business hours. Copies of the papers relating to the settlement are also available at www.magazine.org.

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

DON OF CREATION

"Lost in La Mancha" and "The Guru."

BY ANTHONY LANE

For anyone who suffers from the wish to make movies, or who fears that this terrible condition may strike at any time, here is the cure. "Lost in La Mancha," directed by Keith Fulton and Louis Pepe, is a documentary account of Terry Gilliam's efforts to bring "Don Quixote" to the screen. That information alone should be enough to open up endless vistas of possible catastrophe. The level of activity inside the Gilliam brain, first registered in his animated work for Monty Python, is so giddily high that his disasters, such as "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen," seem to exist only inches away from victories like "Brazil" and "The Fisher King." Add to that the aura of magnificent hopelessness that hangs around Cervantes's tale, and you can already hear the windmills in the distance starting to creak, awaiting a maddened filmmaker at full tilt.

"Lost in La Mancha" begins in the year 2000. Gilliam, who has been pondering the project for more than a decade, has finally mustered the funding, although—and this is where American viewers will lick their lips, ready for a deep dish of intercontinental Schadenfreude—all the funds in question, some thirty-two million dollars, are European. That is, as Gilliam says, a big chunk of change, and it brings with it a set of European conditions that verge on delectable parody, starting with the heavily tossed salad of accents to be found on the set. The director of photography is Italian, the locations are Spanish, and the producer is French, as is Gilliam's choice for Quixote—Jean Rochefort, who is seventy-two years old, although he doesn't look a day over eighty. "He is just so beyond perfect," Gilliam says, and, indeed, there is something in the dispirited droop of Rochefort's mustache, with a face as long as his steed's, that marks him out as the quintessential Don. On the other hand, he is French, and his spoken English sounds like Inspector Clouseau playing the kazoo. Also—and this is a drawback, which Rochefort happens to share with the other stars, Johnny Depp and Vanessa Paradis—he isn't around when he needs to be. "On 'Munchausen,' we didn't have costumes or sets," Gilliam says. "Now we don't have any actors. We have costumes and sets, but no actors." If you haven't seen Gilliam's Quixote picture, that's because it was never completed. To be honest, it was hardly started.

How *do* these things come to pass? Never mind preproduction, what about pre-pre-preproduction, when somebody might have cared to check the fine print of the performers' contracts, or realized that the only available soundstage in Madrid was an echoing shed with a dirt floor? Hollywood studio chiefs will take one look at "Lost in La Mancha" and scrub all European shoots for the foreseeable future, and you can't help feeling that what this enterprise required was Louis B. Mayer, or, though one has no wish to be cruel, Harry Cohn. Mind you, even Cohn could not have predicted the climatic delights of Gilliam's desert location, which in the space of a lunch break allows a perfectly nice day to mutate into a primeval hailstorm that buries half the equipment in a mudslide. The rain in Spain, it would seem, falls exclusively on the plain. Even to insurance companies, this counts as an act of God, although the expression on the face of the claims adjuster, when he arrives to assess the palaver, suggests that he will be seeing the Almighty in court.

"Lost in La Mancha" winds down quietly and dismally, as the plug is yanked on Gilliam's movie. In a final teaser,

The New Yorker (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for six combined issues: Feb. 17 & 24, Apr. 21 & 28, June 16 & 23, July 14 & 21, Aug. 18 & 25, Dec. 22 & 29) by The Condé Nast Publications Inc. (4 Times Square, N.Y., N.Y. 10036-6592), which is a division of Advance Magazine Publishers, Inc. Vol. LXXVIII, No. 45, February 3, 2003. Periodical postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Publications Mail Agreement No. 40644503. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office.
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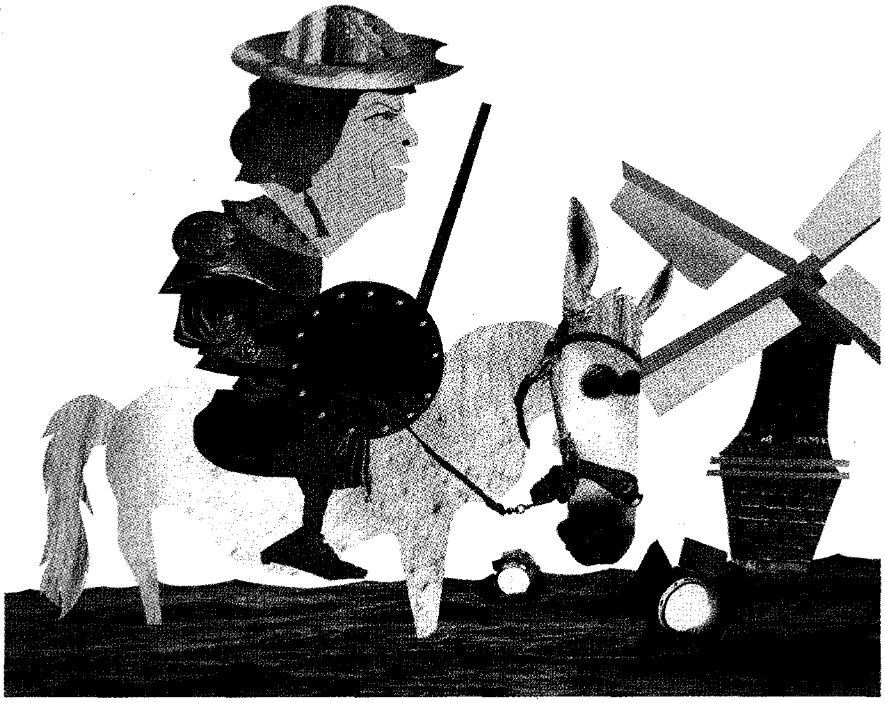
however, we are told that he is currently trying to plug it back in, although I suspect that, with Rochefort felled by a double hernia, the call will go out for a fresh Quixote. What, pray, is Peter O'Toole doing these days? Gilliam, after his tribulations, will feel better prepared for a second go, and so endearing is his Woody Woodpecker laugh, and so contagious the grin on that beachball of a head, that one desperately wants him to succeed. This time, I regret to say, he is unlikely to film next to a NATO training area, which means that we will be deprived of that charming moment in which Quixote's chivalrous imprecations are drowned out by the overhead growl of F-16s.



A documentary traces Terry Gilliam's attempt to film "Don Quixote."

STEPHEN KRONINGER

Does all of this amount to anything more than an exercise in disorder, in the unravelling of the impossible dream? We have little finished footage to go by, but enough to give us pause: an exquisite clip of Rochefort, sitting with a book in the half-darkness, his eyes wet, gleaming, and morose. It lasts no more than half a minute, but, like the intriguing snatches that we see of Orson Welles's own attempt to film Cervantes—again, planned over many years, and never allowed to bloom—the sequence suggests that the mythological pull of the tale is so strong that directors will forever be drawn toward it. The central image of the Don, in his homemade armor, is such an immaculate welding of pathos and absurdity that, even more than Falstaff, he can ride into view and immediately spear the audience's attention; the touching thing about him, as Gilliam points out, is that his exploits represent "a last hurrah. He has one last chance to make the world as interesting as he dreams it to be." No wonder Welles became obsessed. As things stand, cinema has been stuffed too deeply with youthful yearning, from James Dean to Eminem. Why can't the elderly make fools of themselves with equal, if not greater, aplomb?

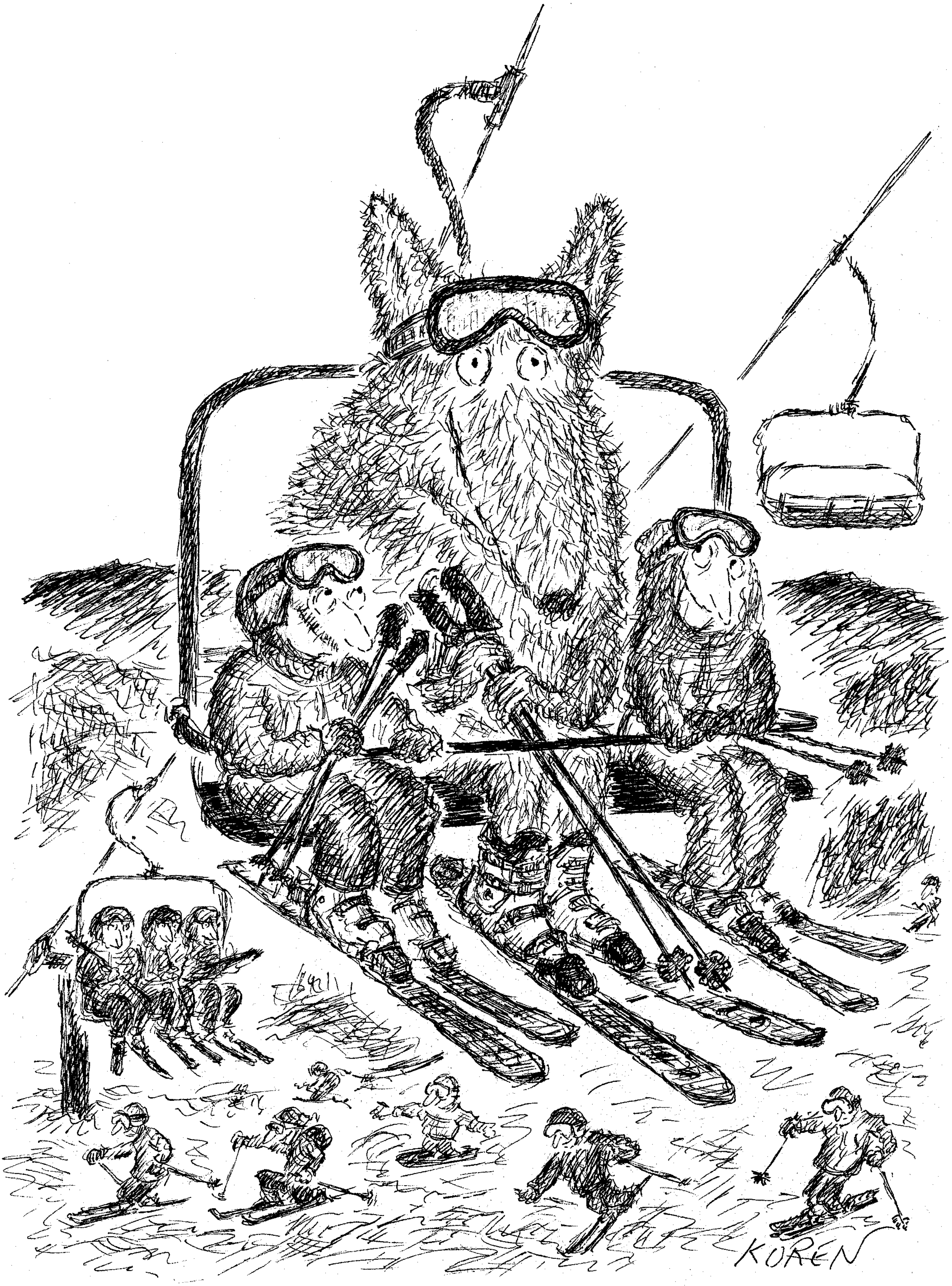
The opening of "The Guru" could not be clearer. A small Indian boy writhes with boredom in his cinema seat, faced with a Bollywood extravaganza—one of those all-singing, all-dancing, no-screwing feasts of love in which India has long specialized, and in which the drabbest color on display is a shade of pink that would pique the interest of nuclear-weapons inspectors. It touches no chord, however, in the soul of the kid, who sneaks out and slips into another auditorium, where John Travolta is crowing to Olivia Newton-John. The film is "Grease," of course, and the boy's expression says it all: You're the one that I want.

We jump ahead a few years and find the lad, now a young man named Ramu (Jimi Mistry), quitting India to seek his fortune in New York. Here, more or less by accident, he becomes a sexual sage, tending to the carnal—and, by extension, the spiritual—shortcomings of the American rich. Needless to say, he is a fraud, who pinches all his ideas from Sharonna (Heather Graham), a sweet-visaged porno star who, in turn, conceals her career from her pious boyfriend. There is a polished comedy to be carved from these multiple deceptions; "The Guru," unfortunately, is not that film, and the ghost of Preston Sturges, lolling in his paradise of farce, need fear nothing from the travails of the director, Daisy von Scherler Mayer. For one thing, you cannot wait until the final fifteen minutes to inform the audience that one of your characters is gay, purely in order to pair your lovers off with a flourish.

Then, there is the matter of the leads. Heather Graham is a good sport, and she looks notably content with a gleaming gold headdress and bare belly; Marisa Tomei, too, does what she can with the scandalously thin role of a misguided airhead ("I really want to help mankind," she says, through a mouthful of breakfast). But Jimi Mistry, the hub of the picture, looks ill at ease, badly stranded between his duties as smooth operator and cultural ingénu, and that is sufficient to cut off any supply of sexual charge.

The representation of Indians in Western movies has a grisly history. I remember wincing at the sight and sound of Fisher Stevens in "Short Circuit," saddled with dark makeup and a gobbling accent as late as 1986; no one in Hollywood had been forced into blackface for decades, so what was so permissible about brownface? Things improved only with the advent of M. Night Shyamalan, who, from "The Sixth Sense" onward, has used Indian actors in ordinary parts and offered no comment on ethnic difference. By those civilizing standards, "The Guru" is a wretched step backward, with its unthinking nods to the exotic. I gave up at the point where one Indian man was required to chide another with the dreaded words "Don't get your turban in a twist," and, given the choice, I would have preferred to watch the porno sagas in which Sharonna so energetically refines her craft. "Good Will Humping" may be a little obvious, but "Glad He Ate Her" sounds like my kind of Roman epic. I wonder what they do with the tigers. ◆

THE BACK PAGE BY EDWARD KOREN



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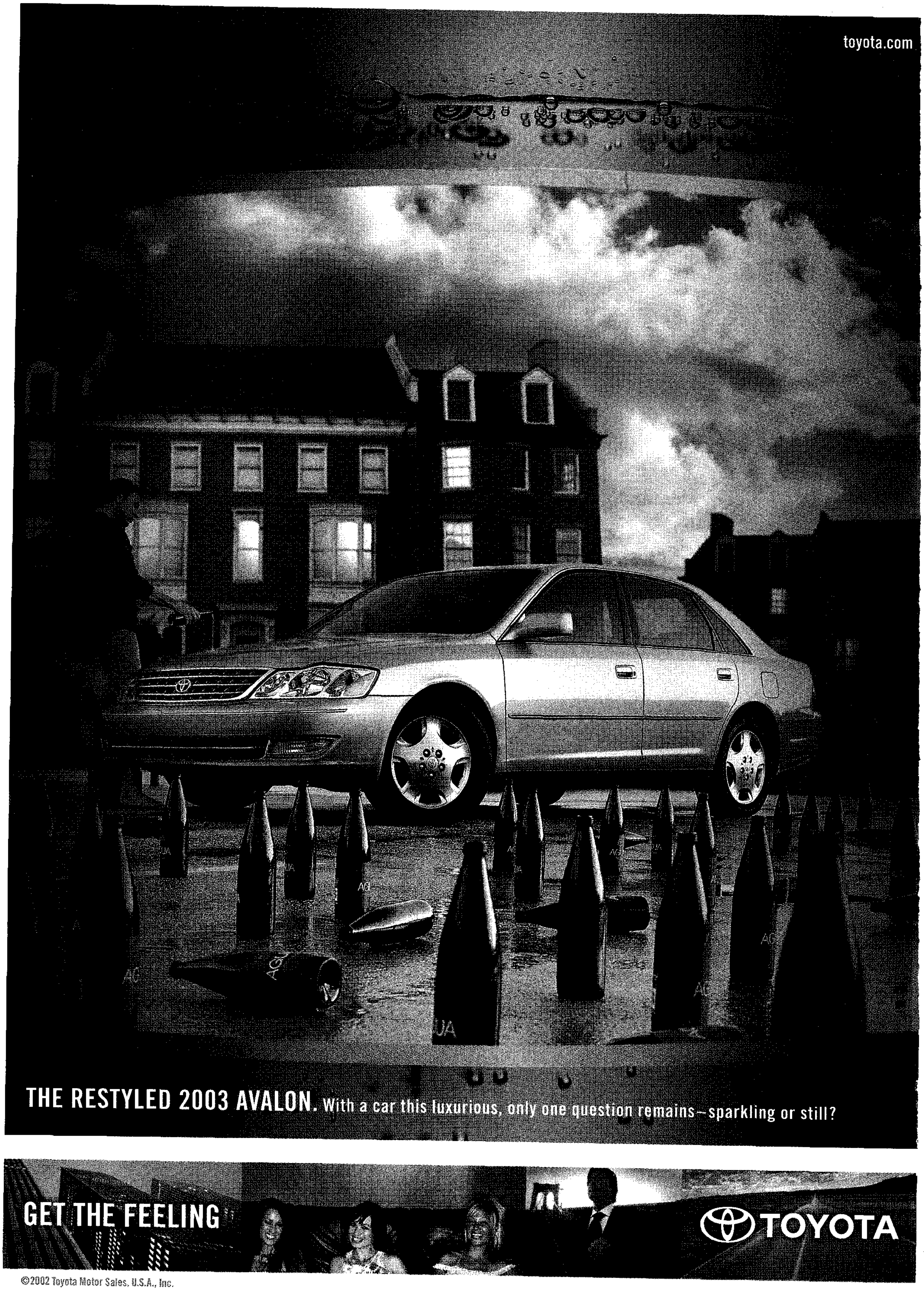
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